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MUSICAL TALES, PHANTASMS, AND SKETCHES.

FROM THE GERMAN OF

ELISE POLKO.

London:
SAMUEL TINSLEY,
10, SOUTHAMPTON STREET, STRAND.
1876.

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TO

SIR JULIUS BENEDICT

THIS LITTLE WORK IS (BY PERMISSION)

MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY HIS GRATEFUL PUPIL,

THE TRANSLATOR.

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MUSICAL TALES.

THE SINGING FLOWERS.

In the lovely spring-time, when all nature revives and rejoices, we may often thoughtfully pass those mute blossoms to whom God has indeed given a lovely eye, wherewith to see, but on whom He has bestowed no scent, that tender language of flowers. Our poor weak human understanding will sometimes lead us to think that our all-wise Creator has dealt hardly with them, and we shall then feel inclined to pity those beautiful but ever-silent creatures of His hand. It is strange, however, that these much-pitied flowers do not appear sorrowful, notwithstanding the compassionate glances which our eyes cast upon them; they will even smile, so mysteriously and clandestinely, that our hearts are sometimes much moved. There is indeed a charming mystery in the life of flowers such as these, and if you will listen attentively I will reveal it to you.

One warm summer evening a young man knelt at the grave of his betrothed. The winter had robbed him of his bride, and blighted the flower of his life for ever; spring confined him to a bed of sickness, and thus

it happened that now, by the mild light of the full moon, he beheld for the first time the resting-place of one who had been dearest to him while on earth. God saw the sacred, heartfelt sorrow of the mourner, and at the countless windows of His heavenly mansion He kindled lights of dazzling brightness, which shed their soft radiance over the grave, so that the angels, above all, the deceased bride, could count the tear-drops which fell so abundantly from those sorrowful eyes.

All the flowers which grew around the tomb now became luminous, and shone brightly. At the feet of the slumberer an old tulip-tree stood motionless in the moonbeams, while at the head of the grave grew a bed of white violets, innocent as the pure being who slept beneath them. The gentle lily stood bending its head to the ground; alpine roses smiled significantly; blue campanulas trembled in the breeze; and rich clusters of lovely ericas grew around and above the hillock. The young man's trembling hand laid a white camellia, the favourite flower of his dead bride, upon the tomb. As he offered this gift, the first that had ever been received without a loving smile and tender thanks, his aching heart at last broke, and with a wild cry of agony he sank down upon the grave.

A beautiful, shining angel now besought our good Father, 'Thou All-merciful, send, oh send him, in his bitter sorrow, the gentle Angel of Sleep!' And God heard the timid request; the Angel of Sleep, with the loving eyes and the long, fair ringlets, crowned with a wreath of poppies, touched the brow of the sufferer who now passed an hour of his weary existence in blissful slumbers.

'Only an hour?' do you ask? Oh! happy ones! who can ask such a question! you know not that an hour may seem an eternity to the bereaved, grief-torn heart!

The clock in the church tower struck the hour of midnight, and the last stroke had scarcely died away when strange sounds were heard to proceed from the old tulip-tree and its blossoms. The tones were deep and soft, resembling those which are drawn from the violoncello by the human hand. The chorus of white violets joined in sweetly and harmoniously, the penetrating voices sounding like violins of a delicately clear tone. The blue flowers of the campanulas rang like a peal of silver bells; the song of the little lilies, ericas, and alpine roses was as the murmuring of flutes, viols, and harps. Mysterious chords filled the air with harmony. The sleeper awoke, and listened breathlessly. Suddenly the leaves of the white camellia began to tremble and shake: the beautiful flower itself trembled, and then began to sing in a voice such as is never heard by human ear. The tones increased in power and beauty, sounding from far and near: enchanting harmonies floated upon the breeze. Every leaf was in motion; insignificant flowers, which would scarcely have been visible to the human eye, even in the brightest sun-light, raising their tiny heads and joining in the heavenly music. The mourner was no longer conscious of his heavy human existence; the music had drawn him away from all his sorrow, and it seemed as though a beloved voice whispered: 'Rejoice, for thou hast listened to what is heard alone by those to whom it is appointed to die! Be calm, be happy! thou mayest enter into thy heaven.' Then was heard one

chord which thrilled even to his heart—and deep silence reigned around. The youth's head sank upon the fading, now silent camellia; he heard not the clock in the church tower as it struck the first hour of the dawning day; he was united for ever with his loved one in heaven.

This then is the secret of the scentless flowers; they may sing every night, each blossom having a different voice, and the angels listen to their harmonies. Ah! what is the sweetest earthly music compared with this? But those sorrowful human beings whom God is about to call away from His earth are alone permitted to listen to these harmonies, and he who hears the song of a flower may calmly prepare for his pilgrimage to that better world.

"A STEADFAST FORTRESS IS OUR GOD."

"Der grosse Künstler muss in der Stunde wo er seine Mosisdecke aufhebt und auf seinem Berge die ewigen Gesetze der Kunst empfängt, sein tieferes Leben und Geniessen und Leiden vergessen, und indem er gen Himmel steigt, muss unter ihm die Erde mit ihren kleinen Reichen zusammenkriechen und unter der letzten Wolke verschwinden."—JEAN PAUL.

A COLD, dull October day was succeeded by a wintry evening. The fog swept in weird forms over the fields, and an icy wind arose, pitilessly tearing off the beautiful many-coloured leaves which still clung feebly to their beloved trees, and scattering them beneath the feet of the traveller. Sorrow and anxious

fear seemed to hang over all nature; it was as if the voice of winter had been heard from afar, telling in malicious whispers of cold days to come, of long dark nights, of frost flowers and snow-flakes. But in the town, whose houses were crowded together in the centre of an extensive plain, all seemed more cheerful, for the inhabitants had taken refuge in their houses, bidding defiance to the wintry blast, and a pleasant glow, suggesting thoughts of warmth and comfort, penetrated through the closed casements.

It was about the year 1732, and the town of which I am speaking was named Leipzic; it was surrounded by deep trenches, high walls, and noble lime-trees, and looked defiant and well defended. Almost all the houses were narrow and high, with curiously pointed projecting balconies, and here and there little turrets upon the roofs. Church towers, however, were but sparingly distributed.

In the rooms occupied by the cantor of the venerable Thomas School, the lights seemed to burn even more brightly than elsewhere, on this October evening, and merry voices were heard in conversation—a happy, united family resided there. At the massive oak table, which occupied the centre of a room remarkable for its quaintly-carved chairs and great, dark cupboards, sat a man dressed in plain black clothes, and wearing a stately but somewhat rough-looking wig. His countenance was full and blooming, and bore a serious yet kindly expression, his forehead well formed, and of transparent clearness, and the glance of his black, fiery eyes had an indescribable power, which it was almost impossible to resist. You were compelled to look at them again and again; you felt as if

you were about to learn from them something of unearthly beauty; and your heart leapt within you as though forcibly attracted towards those dark eyes, which seemed to take refuge behind that black veil that the eyes of mankind might not be dazzled by the fathomless sea of light within them.

This man, Johann Sebastian Bach, was celebrated throughout the town for his beautiful organ-playing. The good people of Leipzic would, however, sometimes remark that he was a curious fellow, with whom they should not care to have much to do; and they would often dubiously shake their wise heads as they listened to his strange fugues and incomprehensible voluntaries upon the organ. But not one of them could leave the church while he was playing, and one shudder after another would fly through the hearts of the listeners while the mightiest harmonies swelled and rolled as though they would break in pieces the church walls, and crush beneath the falling ruins the trembling children of men.

On the right of the cantor sat his wife, a vigorous-looking, good-featured woman, in a snowy cap and neckerchief. On her knees sat her youngest son, Christoph, a sturdy child about three months old, and several other healthy-looking boys had stationed themselves near their mother, playing with their little brother, and at the same time consuming roasted apples with great satisfaction.

Bach's eldest son, Friedemann, a tall, stately young man, resembling his father, but without his mild and pleasing expression of countenance, stood near the gigantic stove, gazing thoughtfully upon the noisy group of his brethren. On the left of the cantor sat

a tall, neatly-dressed youth; he had thick black hair, and his engaging, agreeable features bore a strong likeness to his father's powerful countenance. This was Bach's second son, Philip Emanuel, who was now on a visit to his father. He had undertaken a long and tedious journey from Frankfort on the Oder, in order to surprise his beloved family. He had just been giving his father an account of the Academy of Music which he had founded at Frankfort and was directing successfully, and now drew from his pocket a few sheets of music-paper, which he timidly pushed towards the cantor, with the words, 'Dearest father, see if it is good for anything!'

It was a beautiful sonata. Bach's eyes glistened as he turned over the leaves and accompanied the perusal with a slight movement of his fingers. He then pocketed the roll, saying, good-humouredly,—

'We shall make something of you in time, my boy; only go onwards, with God's help. Friedemann, too, works well; his playing does him credit. One day you will perhaps be a source of great pleasure to me.'

The brothers listened joyfully and with child-like smiles to the words of their much-honoured father, and gratefully pressed his hands.

Suddenly was heard the trampling of horse's feet, followed by a violent knocking at the door of the house. The two eldest sons started and sprang from the room, the children forgot their noisy play, the mother grew pale. Sebastian Bach alone remained calm and unmoved.

'How can you demean yourselves thus?' he said. 'Not one of us has a guilty conscience, let happen what will.'

A few moments later a postillion appeared, covered with mud and apparently much fatigued, having come direct from the court of the Elector at Dresden. He desired to speak with the cantor, Johann Sebastian Bach, and delivered to him a note from that powerful minister, the much-dreaded Count Brühl. The cantor drew the great oil lamp towards him, shaded his eyes with his hand, and read (while Philip Emanuel courteously offered the messenger a chair),—

'MY DEAR CANTOR,—

'Our gracious prince and master, Augustus of Saxony and Poland, wishes to hear you, the celebrated and much esteemed organist, Johann Sebastian Bach, at his capital. On Sunday, the 24th October, you will play in the church at Dresden. Two days after the receipt of this letter a royal carriage will be dispatched to Leipzic, and will bring you to the capital, where you are awaited with much impatience. Prepare yourself worthily for this high honour, my dear cantor. By command of my most gracious master I greet you,

(Signed)

'COUNT BRÜHL.'

Bach stood long in deep thought, scorn and anger striving for the mastery over his countenance; his eyes rested in turn on each member of his family. Friedemann and Philip maintained a modest silence.

'Sir Courier,' said Bach, at last, slowly and firmly, 'say to the minister that I, Sebastian Bach, cantor of the Thomas School at Leipzic, will obey the command of my prince and come to Dresden.'

'Might I ask for a written reply?' suggested the courier.

'How now, sir!' thundered Sebastian Bach, drawing himself up to his full height; 'how dare you presume to require such a thing? Did you not understand me? Have not I, Sebastian Bach, given you my word? Do you take me for one of those faithless rogues who may prosper in the atmosphere of a court, and to whom a paltry scrap of paper is more binding than the word of a man, spoken in God's sight?'

'Dear father!' said Philip Emanuel, beseechingly.

'Silence, boy! you know nothing about it!' exclaimed his father, passionately. Then, turning to the messenger, he added, more calmly, 'Now you have your answer; you may repeat all this to the count if you choose; I care not!'

The courier, pale with fright, had stepped back several paces. Bach seized him by the collar, drew him nearer, and said, kindly,—

'Well, that will be a good lesson to you, will it not? Bear it in mind, but not only while you are in my house; the court is not everywhere. And now there's an end of it. If you will stay and have supper with us, and partake of a jug of beer, you shall be welcome.'

The disconcerted courier, however, took a hasty leave of the family, and Bach cheerfully seated himself at the table. All crowded anxiously round him, and his wife, Gertrude, exclaimed,—

'Alas, my Bastian! you are going out into the wide world, away to Dresden, where you will be surrounded by the pomp and splendour of the sinful city! Oh! the long, long, tedious journey! No, husband, for the sake of your wife and children, you will not go!'

With these words she burst into tears, and clung, sobbing, round her husband's neck. The children, see-

ing their mother in tears, began likewise to wail, and seized their father's coat; the two eldest sons conferred with each other respecting the count's letter, speaking loudly and vehemently; the noise in the little apartment was, in fact, overpowering.

At length Bach's strong, rich voice was heard above the tumult.

'Wife,' he cried, 'take these screamers to the nursery, only Friedemann and Philip shall remain here.'

Like a roused lion he suddenly and with a powerful effort shook off the noisy troop of children, and the mother delivered the little flock into the charge of the old nurse.

Bach was pacing up and down the room with long strides when his faithful partner, her eyes wet with tears, again took her seat at the table.

'You must not worry yourself about the long journey, Gertrude,' he said, mildly; 'in a fortnight's time I shall be back in my old nest again, if it be God's will. Besides, I have decided to take these two'—pointing to Friedemann and Emanuel—'to the capital with me; they, too, shall see the gay doings there, and will take care of their father.'

The sons thanked him, their eyes beaming with pleasure.

'Yes, children,' he continued, 'the beautiful, clear, divine voice' (thus he sometimes called his beloved organ) 'shall move the hearts of those worldly ones, until they shall tremblingly stretch forth their hands, praying softly and secretly, "Pater Peccavi." And Hasse, too, shall confess that there are loftier, holier sounds than the sweet luxurious melodies of beautiful Italy!'

As he spoke, his countenance became radiant, and his family gazed upon him with unbounded reverence. Soon he cried, cheerfully,—

'Now, mother, let those madcaps in again, and bring us the soup.'

The table was laid, a great jug of foaming ale was placed before Bach's seat, a huge loaf was placed beside it, and Father Bach, having said a short grace, gave to each his portion, beginning with the eldest. His wife in the meantime dealt out the steaming soup, and soon all were feasting, talking, and laughing.

On the following day Bach went to the rector, to obtain the necessary leave of absence for his important journey. This was to him a most disagreeable proceeding, for it was his custom to avoid, as far as lay in his power, all communication with his superior. The rector and the cantor were certainly not on the most friendly terms with each other: the former was wont to complain bitterly of his subordinate's rude behaviour and obstinate disposition, while Bach would often call the rector a withered, ungodly pedant. It was indeed impossible to discover on that rector-tree a bright young branch or fresh green leaf; the man was wintry both inwardly and outwardly. His soul was dried up and shrivelled like his body, and buried in the thick dust of mouldy book-learning. The most beautifully tinted flower had no charms for him; he would count its stamens, examine its corolla, and then cast it from him; birds and animals were only honoured with his attentions when he was trying poisoning experiments (his favourite recreations) upon them. All men were alike indifferent to him; he loved no one. The organ

performances of his refractory cantor he did not scruple to call diabolical; he always avoided their influence, and for this reason seldom attended the early divine service. He even hinted that a certain personage, who shall be nameless, had engaged to act the part of organ-blower when Bach practised, opposed the cantor in every way that lay in his power, and rejoiced, like a malicious demon, at Bach's frequent outbreaks of passion. Gladly would he have caused the cantor's fall; but it needed other strength than his to shake such a rock, and he was alone in his hatred, for both masters and students looked with silent love and admiration upon the mighty ruler of the thundering organ.

As, then, Sebastian Bach, who was at the time in a rather excited frame of mind (he had been practising with his pupils, and his wig, as usual on such occasions, was in a deplorable condition), entered the study of the school tyrant, the rector drew himself up to the greatest possible height, as he sat in his leathern arm-chair stared at the new-comer with his little grey eyes, and gravely inquired,—

'Well, what grievances has Mr. Bach to complain of now?'

'No complaints, sir,' replied Bach; 'I only came to say that I must undertake a long journey to-morrow, by command of our prince, so I hope you will grant me leave of absence for a fortnight.'

'What do I hear?' cried the rector, almost breathless with surprise and vexation. 'Long journey—must undertake—Prince Elector! And I not know of it! Go to, cantor; this is another little pleasantry invented by your fertile brain! How should Prince Augustus——'

'I am to play the organ in Dresden, by command of the elector,' interrupted Bach, calmly.

'That does indeed seem rather strange and incredible!' rejoined the rector, with a sarcastic smile. 'The journey does not seem limited to any particular time, so I may as well inform you at once that I cannot dispense with the services of the cantor for the next four weeks. After that time I will no longer oppose your wishes.'

Bach's noble features showed no trace of anger or emotion during this malicious speech; the wonderful eyes gazed steadily at his dwarfish opponent, and a smile of indescribable pity played upon his countenance. At last he said, slowly and firmly,—

Mr. Rector, please give me a decided answer! Will you grant me a fortnight's holiday!'

'No, *no*, and for the last time, NO!' shouted the enraged rector, violently.

'Very well; then I will only remark that I shall go without leave of absence!' was the cantor's reply, as he turned, and left, with a firm step, the room where sat his foe, trembling with passion.

It was the afternoon of that Sunday on which Bach had promised to play the organ in Dresden. So brilliant an assembly of noble and illustrious men and women had never before been beheld in the great and beautiful Catholic church of that magnificent city. The countless knights, in their glittering court dress, the beautiful women, adorned with the most costly jewels or remarkable alone for the still more attractive gracefulness of youth, formed a sparkling crowd, in the midst of which stood the kingly figure of Augustus of Saxony

The form of the prince was yet unbent (notwithstanding his advancing years), his head erect; but the former beauty of his features, now sunken and wan, was betrayed only by the fineness of the nose and mouth and the outline of the chin, and the fire of the great eyes was extinguished.

Augustus conversed in a low tone with his favourite Brühl, who stood beside him in the graceful attitude of an accomplished courtier, seeming to listen with humility to the words of his noble master. But untamed pride was seem in his lofty forehead, insatiable ambition sparkled in those restless eyes, boundless love of power agitated those finely-cut lips.

'So he would not come to court yesterday, that funny cantor?' whispered the prince, smilingly. 'Well, I will tease him all the more to-day. As soon as the concert is over I will desire to see him; he shall appear at the supper and ball; the most beautiful young ladies of our court shall invite him to dance.'

Brühl bowed silently.

'We certainly are all very anxious to hear this celebrated organist,' continued the prince; 'expectation shows itself on all faces. Hasse raises his thick eyebrows, and even the bewitching Faustina looks anxiously around, as though she were expecting to discover a rival. Our virtuoso Marchand alone has not yet laid aside his sarcastic smile. But hush! three figures have just appeared in the chancel. Look, Brühl, at those two young men who are modestly seating themselves at the side; what pleasing innocent faces!'

'They are the two eldest sons of the cantor, your Highness,' answered Brühl.

A chord from the organ now filled the air, and, like

a breath from heaven, cleansed the minds of the listeners from all vain thoughts. Deep silence fell upon the assembly, an indescribable feeling of reverence reigned in all hearts, and all eyes gazed upwards. A glorious prelude swept along like the full, golden stream of a river, on whose banks grew flowers of paradise, bearing the soul on its mighty waves, which surged higher and higher, ending at last in the irresistibly powerful chorale,—

'Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott.'

The majestic song of the Evangelical Church sounded from the organ; Father Bach caused it to swell louder and louder, accompanying each tone with a blissful smile,—for was he not celebrating, in the Catholic house of God, the triumph of his beloved Church? Like a mighty conqueror the holy melody resounded throughout the beautiful edifice, re-echoing as powerfully as if numberless invisible choirs of angels were joining in the triumphant chorus. But the flood of harmony still swept on; Bach's soul soared higher and higher; the mighty tones grew ever holier and more wonderful; a gigantic, mysterious voice fell from above into the sounding sea, whose murmurings and roarings waxed louder and louder, striking powerfully against every human heart as if to break it, and surging around every head, menacing all with destruction. And now the pillars of the church began to quake, for it seemed as if the piteous voices of whole races of mankind were raised in prayers for mercy, as though the whole world were rising to implore compassion. But the beautiful melody, 'Ein feste Burg,' still reigned above the tumult, like sweet incense offered by the holy

ones. The mysterious murmurings grew yet louder, as if in answer to the prayers of faith and love. At last the beseeching voices seemed to grow weary, the complaints were fainter and softer, the prayer became desponding; then came, oh marvel! the sweet reconciliation. The lofty roof of the church melted away, glorious streaks of blue and golden light streamed in, and the perfumed breath of spring filled the sacred edifice. Sweet, warm sounds descended, and a heavenly voice, full of boundless compassion, promised eternal forgiveness of all sin. Pious exultation now rose in clear, holy tones, and at last millions of joyful human voices, with which were mingled the alleluias of angels, joined in the overpowering victorious anthem,—

'Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott.'

The tones of the organ had ceased to vibrate, but Sebastian Bach still sat on the bench, his hands folded, and his countenance luminous with heavenly joy. His two sons stood by his side, deathly pale with excitement, trembling with joy at the triumph of their honoured father. Faint murmurs arose from the church. One of the side doors of the chancel now opened, and the Prince Elector appeared, his glittering retinue following him at a respectful distance. Augustus of Saxony almost timidly approached the great man who sat so modestly before him, and who, absorbed in a pious reverie, had not become aware of the presence of his prince. The elector seemed unwilling to interrupt his prayerful meditations; at length, however, he gently laid his hand on Bach's shoulder. The cantor started, rose from his

seat, and smilingly fixed his eyes on the prince's countenance. Bach's great soul was yet filled with the glory of his God, into whose heaven he had ascended on the wings of the organ tones; how could he, in that moment of divine inspiration, be awed by earthly power and glory? It was with much difficulty that he at last found words of earthly language to address the prince.

'Most gracious master,' he said, softly, after a long pause, 'I can see that the divine voice has penetrated to your inmost heart. Say, is not that a wonderful, blissful feeling, although accompanied by such strange fear and trembling? Say, does it not seem to you now as though all were sunshine around us? and do you not feel a longing desire to behold greater, more glorious worlds than this grain of dust which bears us? Does not all earthly glory fall to dust before the glittering splendour above? Would you not gladly deliver yourself up body and soul to that divine voice, that it might carry you to the regions of eternal light whence it comes?'

'Bach,' answered the prince, his voice trembling with emotion as he approached yet nearer to the cantor, 'when I heard you play I felt a foreboding of my approaching death. But the thought came to me as a gentle spirit; I trembled not at its approach as I sometimes do, when, in solitary hours, I reflect upon the dark mysterious end of our human existence. Oh, Meister! would that I could hear you in my last hours!'

Bach answered not a word, but observed his royal master with eyes now overflowing with emotion and noble joy. His pious heart was now celebrating a far greater triumph than his musician's pride.

A noise was heard at the door, and a woman in the full bloom of youth, a majestically tall figure, with a proud, Juno-like head, hastily forced a passage through the prince's attendants. It was Faustina Hasse, the much-admired singer, the celebrated favourite of the whole capital. With all the impulsiveness of an Italian, she rushed, agitated and weeping, towards the cantor, fell upon his neck, and amidst never-ceasing sobs kissed him repeatedly on both cheeks. 'God bless you! oh, may you be ever blessed!' she cried, in deep agitation.

The spectators smiled, and Bach seemed unable to recover from his amazement; but Hasse approached, and naming himself, as with gentle force he drew his wife towards him, he pressed the cantor's hand in unfeigned reverence. Marchand, the light-hearted French wit and elegant virtuoso, now appeared; no scornful smile was seen on his countenance, but his eyes glistened with heart-felt emotion as he silently pressed Bach's hand to his heart. The prince's attendants followed the example of the favourite, and soon the prettiest little hands were caressing the cantor's cheeks and fingers, and the most charming lips expressed their thanks. But Bach, with the strength of a giant, suddenly tore himself away, crying, in a voice which re-echoed like thunder from the vaulted roof,—

'Enough! No; such soft trifling and caresses must not be the reward for holy, solemn organ-playing. Away from me, enticing forms, I will see you no longer! I now know well enough that I am in luxurious Dresden, but my only desire is to get away from all the beautiful flowers or serpents to my own dear, quiet home, to my wife and children. Gracious

master!' he cried to the prince, who, with a melancholy smile, was observing the scene, 'let me go! You see now that old Sebastian Bach can never be happy here; he does not know how to swim in these streams!'

'I will not let you go until you have asked a favour of me,' answered Augustus, mildly.

'You can give me nothing, my prince,' was the candid reply; 'I am richer than you, but I thank you.'

'But remember your sons,' continued the prince, kindly.

'Well, most gracious prince, if you could do anything for Friedemann here,' drawing the youth towards him, 'I shall be grateful. But certainly no for the next two years; I want my boy myself. He is an excellent engraver on copper, and we are now working at the Passion Music. God has already provided for my Philip,'—pointing to his second son,—'and it is well with him. With all my heart I thank you, then, most gracious prince.'

The elector took leave of the venerable cantor with the most brilliant promises for Friedemann's future, shook hands with Bach and his sons at parting, and assured each one of his favour. The most illustrious cavaliers pressed forward to escort them, and assisted the humble Leipzic cantor into the carriage with as much solicitude and deference as if he had been the most mighty potentate on earth.

When, on the following morning, Sebastian Bach and his two sons were gladly travelling on towards their beloved home, when, as they passed the stately buildings of the Zwinger, the beautiful Elbe scenery unfolded itself before their delighted eyes, Philip Emanuel cried, excitedly,—

'Dearest father, Dresden is indeed beautiful! But the most beautiful of all is—Faustina Hasse!'

'Silence, boy!' thundered the cantor, but a roguish smile played upon his countenance; 'you know nothing about it.'

IPHIGENIA IN AULIS.

"Ich drücke meinen vollen, frohen Kranz,
Dem edlen Meister auf die hohe Stirne."
GOETHE'S "TASSO."

HOLY, divine music, how glorious is the head which thou encirclest with thy radiant halo! Thy beams, like a mighty talisman, chase away the insect-like army of our human griefs and cares, and those whom thou dost adorn travel safely under thy protection; over the uneven surface of our earth, and through the darkness of its nights their feet stumble not, and shadows flee away before their all-seeing eyes.

'True solitude is in the midst of the noisiest throng, in the busiest scenes of life.' Thus, doubtless, thought many who, one lovely April afternoon, observed a grave, thoughtful-looking man, who had seated himself on one of the benches in the budding gardens of the Versailles park. His countenance was averted from the throng, and directed upwards. His lofty, well-shaped forehead testified to his high powers of mind; his bright blue eyes were not dazzled by the rays of the sun; and heavenly inspiration was plainly visible in his noble features. The plain grey colour of his

dress, which was simple, almost careless, in its arrangement, contrasted strikingly enough with the richly-embroidered garments worn by the gentlemen of the court, for it was the year 1774, and Louis XVI. governed beautiful France.

The innumerable pleasure-seekers who flew hither and thither like swarms of bees, coming and going, seating themselves, chatting, flirting, and laughing, soon ceased to heed the immovable stranger; the gaudily-dressed violet-women, who, gnat-like, assailed all comers, became weary of tormenting him, and no longer honoured him with their glances and smiles The crowds gradually dispersed, and the gardens became quiet, even the noisy children's voices were at last hushed; the sunlight grew fainter, the blue sky darker, the birds, so full of rejoicing in the returning spring, were seeking their nests, and soon all around was still.

Then the solitary one slowly arose from his seat, and seemed to prepare for his return homewards; but as he walked along, thoughtfully gazing up to the sky, he missed the path leading to the entrance gate, and wandered farther and farther into the park. There a magical charm hung over all nature; lovely spring seemed to have hidden herself among those groves, bushes, and shady walks; the air was filled with sweet blossoms and perfumes; the splashing fountains related their charming water-stories; and white marble figures of divinities peeped out from among the fresh green leaves.

The wanderer paused and smiled dreamily; but that beaming smile was not called forth by the splendour of the gardens, it arose from a heart which seemed

filled with pleasant thought. Now he raised his hands, now he dropped them suddenly; he walked hastily to and fro, humming softly at first, then louder and louder, a sweet and plaintive melody. His expressive countenance now grew dark, a thunder-cloud seemed to pass over his lofty forehead, lightnings flashed from his eyes, and in a rich, full voice, which sounded far and wide, he sang the following recitative:—

'Geh' hin und such' den Zod durch Vater's Hand! zu dem grausen Altar soll dir folgen mein Fuss, ich lähme dort den Arm der dich bedroht!'

Then clenching his hands, he drew his stately figure up to its full height, and sang in highest agitation, with truly noble passion,—

'Er ist bald meines Zornes Raub,
Ich werde das Schwert auf ihn zücken;
Den Altar, den frevelnd sie schmücken,
Wirft mein drohender Arm in den Staub.'

Two stately Swiss soldiers now sprang suddenly from the bushes, and, like a furious pair of tigers, seized the excited singer by the shoulders, giving utterance to a storm of abusive epithets in the French and German languages.

'Villain!' cried one, in broken German; 'you lift your hand against the king's castle! You will kill Louis with a sword, destroy the sacred Church, and break in pieces the Altar of the Lord!'

'And see here!' snorted the other, passionately, 'the transgressor has been trampling on the flower-beds of the royal private park, crushing all the violets

and also "les jolies marguerites." Away with him, away to prison!'

Their captive stood totally disconcerted; he silently stared at the aggressors with an expression of unbounded astonishment, and gazed long and wonderingly at the destruction his feet had caused. At last a scornful smile spread itself over his features.

'Well,' said he, calmly, to his gigantic opponents whose eyes jealously watched his slightest movements, 'drag me where you will, but I desire first to be carried before your Queen; in her presence I will justify myself.'

The soldiers secretly exchanged signs which plainly proved that they much doubted the soundness of their prisoner's understanding; they, however, nodded assent to his request, and the little party moved on towards the castle.

As they arrived at the court-yard, a richly-gilded carriage, drawn by four splendid white horses, their heads adorned with beautiful blue plumes, drove up, and stopped at the castle gate. The carriage door flew open, and officious arms and hands were in readiness to receive the slight form of a lady, who gracefully descended from a seat covered with blue velvet and ornamented with precious stones. A black velvet hat with its waving feather surmounted the prettiest little powdered head, lace and rose-coloured satin enveloped her beautiful form. While her corpulent companion was with difficulty rolling herself out of the carriage, Marie Antoinette, gazing round her in some curiosity, remarked the mysterious stranger, whom his captors at that moment were clutching still more firmly than before.

'What is the matter?' she cried, hastily, in the German language, as she paused upon the threshold. At the sound of her voice the prisoner proudly raised his head, and smiled joyfully, while a faint cry escaped from the Queen's rosy lips.

'Oh, Meister Gluck!' she cried, delightedly, stretching out her hand to him; 'dear, dear Gluck! who dares in my kingdom to make you a prisoner?'

Gluck's eyes sparkled as, at a sign from the Queen, the terrified soldiers departed.

'Come, Meister, follow me!' she laughingly continued; 'I will now be your jailer, and you shall not escape me. Spend an hour in the apartments of your former pupil, and tell me quickly what brought you in such suspicious company to our castle gate.'

So saying, she ran so swiftly up the carpeted stairs that Gluck could scarcely keep pace with her; the officious and astonished crowd of servants remained behind, in obedience to a whispered command. Marie Antoinette and her silent companion rapidly traversed several magnificent state apartments; the Queen then opened a door in the tapestry, and both entered a small room, charming in its simplicity, with a delightful view of the gardens in their fresh spring array.

'Princess!' cried Gluck, in unfeigned astonishment, 'this is the dear little room which our beloved Archduchess Maria occupied in the imperial castle at Vienna; what a delightful surprise!'

'You recognise it, then?' answered the Queen, with some emotion, as she pushed a comfortable arm-chair towards him. 'Come, sit by me,' she continued, with charming grace and cordiality, 'now, as long as you are here. I am the light-hearted, happy Princess

Maria, the favourite of the stately Empress mother, and the awkward pupil of the great Meister Gluck.'

She threw off her pink cloak and the plumed hat, and now, arrayed in a dress of pale green silk, a bunch of orange-blossoms and roses at her breast, she stood in all her loveliness before her former teacher.

'Oh, Gluck! how often, since your arrival in Paris, I have secretly longed to have an unconstrained chat with you about old times! but the tiresome court festivities would not permit the desire of my heart to be accomplished. I have not seen you since that formal day of audience when you were presented to the King, and brought me letters from Vienna. I hardly knew you in your court dress, but I was compelled to laugh when I saw your dignified bow, which suited so ill with your attire; by that almost imperceptible inclination of your head, which horrified all the members of the court, I recognised our Gluck. Now you are more suitably attired in that simple grey suit, I can the better recognise my severe master.'

'Gracious Archduchess,' replied Gluck, absently, 'those were pleasant hours which I spent in the Princess's blue room in the imperial castle at Vienna, and Marie Antoinette was a most attentive and docile pupil; few women could be more persevering and indefatigable.'

'Not always, Gluck, not always,' interrupted the Queen, shaking her head. 'You must remember how angry you sometimes were because I played badly, when I was thinking of a court ball, or of a grand sleighing-party. Have you forgotten how often Bach's fugues did not please me? I well remember how

hastily you often pushed me away from the piano, crying, "Archduchess, such jingling is really unbearable!" And then you took my place, and thundered out the fugues until I timidly withdrew to the farthest corner of the room, feeling as though the senses of hearing and seeing were about to forsake me. Oh! and then you played more and more splendidly, melodies I had never before heard saluted my ears, and I was almost terrified. Then the door would open softly, softly, as the Empress came in to listen; and the number of silent listeners increased, filling the room, the ante-room, and the corridors. But you, knowing nothing of this, soared higher and higher upon the wings of music, until at length one of the listeners carelessly overturned something, or one of the fat old court ladies began to cough convulsively. Then you broke off, as if attacked by some sudden pain, and hastily arose, saying, "That was well played, Archduchess!" But sometimes you were so strange that I durst not speak a word. Marie Antoinette might play as she liked, for Meister Gluck was deaf to false chords, unresolved discords, slow *allegros*, and furious *andantes*. My master's eyes were staring upwards with a fixed gaze; now he muttered a few indistinct words; now, in feverish haste, he played something upon the cover of the piano, until he would start up, gaze around him with a joyful smile, and whisper, "At last, at last thou art mine, holy melody!" And then he would turn towards me, as if no interruption had taken place, and exclaim, "Go on, go on, Archduchess!"'

Gluck gazed upon his former pupil with almost fatherly affection, and his countenance brightened as

he observed the cheerful, happy expression of her lovely features.

'We are still unchanged, your Majesty,' he said, dreamily; 'you remain the merry, child-like, gracious princess, I the strange, peevish, absent-minded Gluck.'

The conversation turned upon Gluck's latest works, and the Queen began to inquire about his new opera.

'It is called "Iphigenia in Aulis," is it not?' she asked. 'Will it soon be performed? Have the rehearsals begun?'

'Ah! your Majesty,' answered Gluck, 'did I not hold the first rehearsal to-day, in the royal gardens? Have you forgotten that I still owe you an explanation to account for the company in which I appeared before you? I had been reciting to the winds the recitative and the first two bars of my great *Achilles Aria*, accompanying the music with the correct gesticulations, when I was seized by the brave defenders of the King and his park. The honest Swiss soldiers imagined that my Achilles, who was raving of a drawn sword, had threatened the life of their great master and strangely mistook old Agamemnon for Louis XVI.'

'Poor, misunderstood, ill-used musician!' laughed the queen. 'How fortunate that I should have been the mighty sovereign of France, at the moment when they were about to drag away my dear Meister! But tell me seriously about your "Iphigenia;" when will it be performed? I confess that I can scarcely wait for the day when my countryman and teacher shall triumph over the host of Piccini, Sacchini, and Lulli.'

'I do not yet dream of victory,' answered Gluck,

sadly; 'the date of performance is not even fixed. In the meantime I am fighting determinedly and unceasingly against the mighty but secret force of intrigue and malicious cunning; my enemies oppose all rehearsals, mislead the public opinion, and pierce me with a thousand sword-thrusts. But I do not despair, neither do I rest; my work is worthy of all my efforts to prepare for it a way to the hearts of mankind. Should I perish in the strife, well—it will be without a sigh, without a tear, for I shall leave behind me a brilliant token of my existence; I have not lived in vain. Yes, noble Queen,' he continued, with lofty eloquence and increasing animation, 'it is a good work, this new-born child of my genius, this fruit of sacred, consecrated hours. In this work I have laid the noblest emotions of my soul, the purest feelings of my heart, and my loftiest, most solemn thoughts. Queen, in this opera my whole being and existence disclose themselves; this opera will reveal to posterity what I was and what I wished to become. The music is Gluck himself; I have not only felt this music, I have also thought it; it is my sole, indisputable possession, a part of myself. Past are the days and nights of errors and torments, past the mighty struggle, the passionate, ceaseless strife. My lofty ideal of perfection, untroubled clearness, divinely pure simplicity of melody, truth and nature: that perfection now stands unveiled before me, and almost within my grasp; my blissful goal will soon be reached.'

Gluck was silent. How wonderful was the expression of his strangely cut features, which seemed to belong to another and more beautiful world. Marie

Antoinette gazed at him in wondering awe, until at last she cried, enthusiastically,—

'Dearest Meister, have confidence in your Queen; your "Iphigenia" shall be performed, soon — next week — at my command. By my royal word of power I will destroy the cobwebs of envy, and to-morrow I will express to the director of the Royal Opera my decided wishes on the subject. You shall now no longer strive and fight, you shall *conquer*, and I myself will crown the victor.'

Gluck gazed kindly but incredulously upon the animated countenance of the speaker, in whose mind, perhaps, one splendid, dazzling entertainment would be sufficient to cause forgetfulness of her promise. Her features, however, revealed such earnest purpose, such joyful certainty, that Gluck, much moved, bent down and silently pressed to his lips the hand of the lovely Queen.

At midnight, on the 19th April, 1774, the Opera House at Paris re-echoed with applause such as had never before been heard within its walls; the performance of 'Iphigenia in Aulis,' written by Gluck, the great German composer, was concluded. The audience had received each number with yet greater applause than the preceeding; but the great, splendid *Achilles Aria* raised their enthusiasm to the highest pitch, and the scene was such as had never before been witnessed. The officers involuntarily grasped their swords, and it is impossible to describe the excitement with which the audience were seized; the ever calm, impassible German nation would have termed it madness. Tears flowed, smiles of the highest delight

beamed around, sobs were plainly audible, Gluck's name sounded from a thousand lips, and countless flowers were thrown upon the stage.

Marie Antoinette, in the most splendid attire, leant against the front of the royal box (covered with crimson velvet), her streaming eyes celebrating the triumph of her honoured master. Louis XVI. stood beside her in the deepest agitation, his features, generally so pale, were slightly tinged with red, and he gazed sympathizingly upon the clamorous, excited crowd.

'Oh God!' said he, suddenly, turning to the Queen, 'what if the flash of joy, the fiery glow of this, so easily influenced, people should be turned to fury! What if the angry waves of this crowd should surge as high as now the sea of their delight! What a fearful picture, horrible indeed to look upon!'

Marie Antoinette could not answer a word; she gazed in surprise at the King, but shuddered involuntarily, and anxiously seized his arm.

'Where can Gluck be?' she whispered, uneasily, and almost inaudibly.

Gluck was behind the scenes, tearing himself from the almost suffocating embraces of his friends, endeavouring to escape from the crowd of his vanquished foes, loud in their expressions of admiration. He cordially pressed the hand of his deeply moved opponent, Piccini, and, almost unconscious, almost sinking under the weight of his emotions, he followed a servant who had been sent to conduct him to the royal box.

As Gluck entered, he involuntarily bent low before the King; but the light of the candles dazzled his

eyes, all around him seemed to surge and roar, a storm raged within him, and he convulsively strove for breath. Then the Queen drew near and, with a sweet smile, hastily pressed upon the honoured musician's brow a fresh green wreath of laurel.

Gluck hastily raised himself up, an uncertain gleam was in his eyes; he passed his thin hand repeatedly over his pale forehead, and stared at the Queen with a frightful expression of horror.

'Merciful God!' he screamed, at last; 'what a fearful sight! Quick, noble Queen, wipe away with your white hand that horrible streak of blood which encircles your beautiful neck! Who gave you such an ornament? Destroy it! oh haste, haste! Every instant that dreadful crimson band grows broader! your head totters! the band becomes a stream! Too late! too late! Oh! heavenly Father!'

As he uttered this cry he sank down in a swoon.

'Gluck must see spirits?' whispered the King, now deathly pale; 'the immense excitement has unnerved him; the victory was too sudden, too brilliant for mind and body to bear!'

Marie Antoinette's whole frame shuddered and shook, as, sobbing like a frightened child, she hastily tore off the costly necklace of rubies which, like a moist, glistening band, encircled her snowy neck, cast it far from her, commended the still unconscious musician to the care of her physician and her servants, and trembling as if attacked by ague, leant on the King's arm and hurriedly left the box.

When, in that moment of inspiration, thy lips uttered those awful words, how couldst thou know,

great and glorious Orpheus of modern ages, that thy prophetic vision had lifted the veil which covers the future? that thy mighty soul, in that moment of deepest agitation, had passed the limits of time and space, foretelling what was to come?

The unfading laurels of thy fame had long united their luxuriant branches to form a bower over thy peaceful grave; countless buds and the wondrously sweet blossoms, 'Alceste,' 'Orpheus,' 'Helena,' 'Armida,' and, on one stem, those lovely sister-blossoms, thy two 'Iphigenias,' shone forth with golden hue from among their leaves. Thou wert resting from the battles of life, resting after thy victories, and the praises of posterity reached not thine ear, in a heavenly world Cherubim and Seraphim were listening to the pure tones of thy glorious lyre, when the bloody fulfilment of thy prophecy came to pass. Nineteen years after the night of thy triumph, the crimson band which then encircled the neck of thy beautiful, unhappy sovereign became a stream; in the month of October, 1793, Marie Antoinette's head felt beneath the knife of the guillotine.

FAMILIAR NAMES.

AT the ground-floor window of an insignificant house, in one of the quieter Berlin streets, sat an old gentleman, wrapped in the most comfortable dressing-gown you can imagine. His dark eyes, which age had not

yet deprived of their lustre, were thoughtfully fixed on a group of masons, engaged in building a new house on the opposite side of the street. It was a bright, warm day in the month of May, 1775, and the old gentleman would gladly have opened the window very wide, in order to admit the fresh, invigorating air, and with it, perhaps, some butterfly or pollen-covered bee. It seemed, however, as if he were annoyed by the building opposite, with its noise and dust, for in spite of the unspoken wishes we have recorded, he almost closed the window. Perhaps the open casement might have disturbed other persons besides himself, namely, two young people who sat in a corner of the room, near the old clavichord, conversing most earnestly in whispers. These two persons, a girl and a young man, were betrothed; the former, a daughter of the above-mentioned old gentleman, was named Juliana Benda, the latter was an excellent violinist and composer, the afterwards celebrated Capellmeister Reichardt. Juliana Benda was a rosy, bright-looking girl, of dignified appearance, with splendid, fiery eyes; Reichardt, who was tenderly clasping her hand within his own, was scarcely so tall, but his form was slight and his countenance pleasing and intelligent. Within the hearts of this youthful pair reigned a spring still more beautiful than that which was seen in nature; a ray as of the brightest sunshine illumined their features. To them, doubtless, married life appeared as a flower-bed of budding roses, waiting to unfold, in glorious beauty beneath the wedding sun, a hope which is almost always destined to be disappointed.

The girl's father, Franz Benda, was the oldest branch

of a celebrated family of musicians, and had in his youthful days seen strange and troublous times; this might easily be read in his interesting, deeply-furrowed countenance. A Bohemian by birth, son of a musical linen-weaver in the village of Alt-Benatka, he early attracted universal attention by his beautiful soprano voice and his love for music. When he had attained his twelfth year, his voice procured him an engagement as chorister in the Church of Saint Nicholas, at Prague. After a short time, however, the lively boy, accustomed to live in perfect freedom, became so much irritated by the sundry small persecutions of his superiors and disputes with his companions that he threw off his heavy fetters, and, one fine summer day, fled from a constraint which seemed unendurable to a boy of his romantic and warm-blooded disposition. Bravely and cheerfully he sang and begged his way to Dresden, where after a short trial he was engaged as chorister, and soon gained the affection of his teacher. But he could not long endure the absence from his Fatherland; he pined for the beautiful, romantic Bohemia, and was attacked by an irresistible longing for his home, which overshadowed his soul as a dark cloud covers the sun. The Bohemian possesses to a certain extent the character and disposition of the Swiss; but he is more fiery, more capable of resisting his impulses and desires. A Bohemian does not easily succumb to 'heimweh;' but fights against his cruel foe with reckless bravery and with the courage of despair, and is not conquered until after a long and desperate struggle. Franz Benda strove for nearly two years against this mighty longing of his heart, until at last his strength gave way. Amidst the wild storms and snows of November he

secretly left Dresden, purposing to return to Prague. Oh, what a chain of sorrows and privations was this journey! Benda was almost penniless, and when at last the innumerable cupolas and towers of beautiful Prague rose up before him, he was lying, ragged, half-starved, and burning with fever, in a waggon owned by a peasant, who had been moved with compassion towards the unfortunate boy. When, however, Benda beheld the goal on which his hopes had been fixed, he no longer felt weariness, hunger, or cold, but as he folded his thin hands over an image of St. Nepomuc, which was attached to his neck by a cord, a wild cry of joy escaped from his lips. His first care was to visit the teacher of the St. Nicholas Church choir; he wished to become a chorister again. Ah! he could now bear *anything*, allow himself to be beaten and trampled upon, if only he might stay in his beloved native land.

Benda's former teacher was dead, and his successor received the pale, destitute boy unkindly; but at last listened to his earnest entreaties, and consented to try his voice. He laid before him several of Palestrina's masses for six voices, and summoned a few choristers. Franz chose the celebrated 'Missa Papæ Marcelli,' and prepared to sing the treble part; but,—oh, horror!—all his efforts were unavailing to produce a single tone. Nothing was heard but a hoarse, groaning sound. His beautiful voice was gone, destroyed by the hardships of his journey, by chills or by the fever; enough, it had left him for ever!

Almost wild with despair the boy wandered, begging, through the great and busy city. He entered all the churches and chapels, earnestly beseeching the Holy

Virgin to restore to him his lost possession, but always in vain.

At last, one evening, he wandered, exhausted, despairing, not knowing where to lay his weary head, out into one of the suburbs, when the peculiarly bold and lively rhythm of Bohemian dance music, played by a single violin, fell upon his ear. Lights shone from a few windows on the ground floor of a house; the shivering boy looked in. Ah! there all was merry enough; powerful men, with weather-beaten features, were dancing redowas with graceful women; the cheeks of the dancers were glowing, their eyes sparkled, and smiles beamed from their lips; all was life and joy. The listener, however, saw but one person, the fiddler, an old blind Jew, with the most venerable, patriarchal head, who was seated on a table. Oh! how wonderfully that old fiddle seemed to sing! how soft and yet how rich its tone! The thought flew like lightning through the boy's soul: 'That shall be thy voice! learn to sing on the violin!'

At the first pause, while the exhausted dancers were reposing on the hard wooden benches, Benda reached the door, and found himself, he knew not how, within the smoky room. He at once went to the fiddler, and gently laying his half-frozen hand on the old man's arm, said, with touching earnestness, 'Father, teach me to play like you!' And the white-bearded old man did not seem surprised at the request; a dreamy smile glided over his features as he held out his violin to the boy, who kissed it as reverently as if it had been the image of St. Nepomuc, and said, 'Do you, then, love music?'

Benda threw his arms round the old man's neck, and whispered,—

'I cannot live without music. I once could sing, but now can do so no longer; my voice is dead, but it lives again in the tones of your violin.'

As he spoke his voice trembled; his sorrow for the loss of his chief treasure broke forth again in all its violence.

'Come into my little room presently,' answered the old man, mildly; 'there you shall tell me all which oppresses your young heart. But now I must play again; come, sit by my side until I have finished.'

From that moment arose a touching friendship between a young, fiery mind and a beautiful but weary heart. Löbel, the old blind Jew, became Benda's teacher. Franz learned with almost incredible rapidity, and then, in company with his beloved teacher, for whom he showed a truly child-like fondness, he wandered about the country, playing dance music. He soon established a small band of musicians, which attained to a certain degree of celebrity in villages and small towns. Oh! those were wild delightful times, full of romance and freedom; never-forgotten days, weeks and months in Benda's life. After Löbel's death the musicians dispersed. Benda returned to Prague, and studied under Konyczeck with the most indefatigable industry; he afterwards visited Vienna in order to study music, and more especially to hear it. At twenty years of age he obtained an engagement in Warsaw, as Capellmeister to a wealthy Starost who had been delighted with his playing. Franz Benda's stroke had wonderful power; it was at once majestic and soft. He did indeed sing, and that most nobly; no one could listen unmoved to those beautiful tones. He possessed unusual execu-

tion, although he generally disdained to dazzle by *bravura* the minds of his listeners. He was the founder of a new school of violinists, which might have been called the 'singing school.' After the death of Graun, in Berlin, Franz Benda succeeded him as Capellmeister, in 1771, and it is here we find him again after our little digression.

'Children, let us have some music!' cried old Benda, from his seat near the window. 'Juliana, you know I cannot endure that chattering and fondling during the beautiful daylight hours; you will have plenty of time to make tender speeches to each other after you are married; you will lose all your practice by your trifling. Quick, Reichardt; seat yourself at the old box, there, and accompany the girl in the great *aria* from the "Tod Jesu." Juliana has studied it for the last three days, and will sing it fairly, I hope.'

Reichardt, without replying, hastily seized a thick volume of music; Juliana opened the instrument, and then sprang to her father, whom she embraced affectionately.

'Papa, have you quite forgotten the many pleasant chats you had with mama in your dear Bohemia?' she inquired, so sweetly and roguishly that old Benda could not resist giving her a caressing tap on the cheek in lieu of answer. His eyes followed her graceful movements with fatherly pride and joy as, radiant and smiling, she skipped back to her lover.

Reichardt now began the symphony to the mighty, jubilant *aria*:—

'Singt dem göttlichen propheten,'

and the Capellmeister conducted from his seat near the window. As the girl's full, splendid voice rose, swelled and soared on high like the song of the lark, a young mason stood listening upon the sill of one of the lower windows in the new house opposite. His arms were folded, mallet and trowel had fallen from his grasp, and while his companions worked on, whistling and laughing merrily, and sometimes giving him a rough push to remind him of his duty, he stood immovable, with widely-opened eyes and compressed lips, which seemed to deny passage to his breath. He was a young man of herculean stature, not more than seventeen years of age; his features were not remarkable, but his eyes were pleasing and intelligent. Old Benda had often noticed him, and had even felt some degree of anger as he remarked the continual staring across the road, which he at first suspected to be nothing more than a sign of idle curiosity. Since he had observed, however, that the young mason remained an idle listener only when he could hear music from the Bendas' house, and was a most industrious workman when no sweet sounds were to be heard, the Capellmeister began to feel interested in the young man. He watched him narrowly, and rejoiced to see his look of delight and attention when Reichardt was practising on his violin at his future father-in-law's house, and playing fugues, whose intricate passages could scarcely afford pleasure to any but musicians fully capable of appreciating them.

The young mason, however, showed the deepest interest in Juliana's songs; the human voice seemed to possess the greatest charms for him. When the girl was singing, even if it were only solfeggios, he

was unable to move until the last sound had died away, and would stand in the position we have described, totally regardless of the jeers and reproaches of his companions.

The singer had reached the beautiful passage,—

> 'Steig' auf der Geschöpfe Leiter,
> Wie ein seraph,—steige weiter!'—

which she sang with truly angelic purity of tone, and noble impassioned delivery, concluding with so perfect a shake, that even Papa Benda sprang up, crying, 'Bravo!' At the same instant the window was pushed open from the outside, a warm, dusty young face appeared, and a hand, covered with splashes of lime and mortar, was stretched in.

'Ach, mamsell, that was really too beautiful!' cried a voice, with whose rough, uncertain tones was mingled a good deal of emotion. 'I was obliged to tell you so, and to give you my hand upon it, or I believe my heart would have broken!'

Juliana Benda could not resist this honest praise, and the imploring eyes of the speaker; she laughingly ran to the window, and cordially offered her pretty hand. Reichardt's countenance expressed his astonishment at this little scene; but Benda pushed his daughter aside, took the head which had just appeared at the window in his great thin hands, and cried,—

'Young man, the eye of an old musician is not easily deceived; I tell you, you have chosen the wrong occupation; you belong, by rights, to our fraternity.'

'I sometimes think so myself,' was the answer.

'Well, then, come over to us; throw away your trowel and your apron.'

'I cannot do that now; besides, my father will not allow it.'

'What is your name, then?'

'Karl Friedrich Zelter.'

Our Karl Friedrich Zelter certainly never entirely threw away his trowel; who could deny that there always remained something of the mason in him and about him? Those, however, who care, even a little, for our dear, glorious art, know that he became one of the great company of musicians, and soon attained to eminence as a composer. The worthy Fasch, the well-known founder of the Academy of Singing at Berlin, became his teacher, and Gœthe's poems inspired him to attempt composition. In after years, when he became director of the Academy of Singing, he wrote chorales, motets, and psalms for several voices; but the most successful of his compositions were his songs, in that truly merry style which now, unfortunately, seems almost out of vogue. Where among the modern comic compositions could we find songs that might be compared, for instance, with Zelter's

'Invocavit, wir rufen laut?'

or with his

'St. Paulus war ein Medicus?'

The best and merriest of hearts here smiles at us irresistibly from behind the mask of a certain learned gravity; its unavoidable effect is to produce mirth. Zelter's serious compositions seem rather the result of earnest study than the outpouring of his own cheerful mind. His warm, happy heart was especially

attractive; wherever its influence was felt a mighty impression was certainly produced; all were borne away by it whether they would or no. Even Father Gœthe could not resist this influence.

Papa Benda prided himself not a little on his foresight; he lived to hear Zelter's fame. The lovely Juliana, whose voice Zelter never forgot during his whole lifetime, saw but the first beams of this newly-arisen star; she sank into the grave, a glorious rose in the full beauty of its blossom. Reichardt himself never became intimate with Zelter.

Seldom has a German musician enjoyed so much honour and fame, in death and in life, as our Zelter; his name is one of those which are written in golden letters in the history of music. But the most beautiful tribute which could be paid him as a man and as a musician may be found in a small volume entitled, 'Gœthe's Correspondence with Karl Friedrich Zelter.'

VIOLETTA.

'Ein Veilchen auf der Wiese stand,
Gebückt in sich und unbekannt;
Es war ein herzigs Veilchen.'

A FEW miles from Vienna lies a small village, the name of which I have forgotten; but I think that is of little consequence, for there is not in the whole world a village so charming as this. A chapel stands on an eminence; its grey walls are covered with wild

roses and ivy, and the neat white cottages, half concealed by thick bushes, gaze modestly, like pious worshippers, towards its windows; tall old chestnuts and lime-trees surround this peaceful village.

The residence of the cantor was the prettiest cottage of all; it lay apart from the other houses, and, like them, was covered with flowers. These were the chief joy of the old cantor's life, and his daughter Violetta, herself the loveliest flower of all, grew up among the roses, violets, lilies, and tulips. When his child had attained her sixth year, the cantor buried his wife, the faithful companion of his joys and cares; this was the greatest sorrow of his life, which until then had passed as calmly and peacefully as the course of a streamlet. True, he had always by his side a mighty comforter, who gently lifted him above all hardships, above all sorrow, who had tenderly embraced him when his faithful wife closed her eyes in death; the name of this comforter was 'Music;' she was in fact the passionately beloved, sole mistress of his heart.

He had yet another treasure, an old spinet, which stood in a corner of his room; here the cantor held intercourse with the spirits of the great Bach and Handel, conversed with the old Italian masters, and became blissfully absorbed in the magic worlds which were revealed to him.

Violetta thought that these conversations had not always a very agreeable sound, the spinet often groaned and creaked in a most curious manner, and her father's fingers were not always as nimble as they might have been; but she took good care not to say anything about that, and sat working quietly and cheerfully. When the performer paused, in the

highest degree of ecstacy, and gazed at his daughter silently, his countenance radiant with delight, she gave him a nod and a smile, sometimes gently kissing him on the forehead. Then her father must tell her all he knew about the old musicians, and she would not believe that Sebastian Bach, the great ruler in the kingdom of sound, had worn a long ugly wig, and that Meister Handel had been so fond of snuff. She had thought far differently of those great musicians, and had painted the most beautiful mental portraits, which were ruthlessly destroyed by her father. Almost every day the old cantor repeated the same stories, and Violetta listened with the same quiet attention, it might almost be called reverence, with which she had heard them for the first time, no feature of her lovely countenance revealing a trace of weariness. Happy Violetta! she never forgot for an instant that she, too, had seen a great musician whom people called 'Father Haydn.' Violetta's father, however, always called him, 'My King,' and in his inmost soul there glowed a fire of love and reverence for the great composer, the force of which was not suspected even by his daughter.

The cantor had once taken Violetta, when she was yet a young child, to the great imperial city, where, in the magnificent church, she had heard a splendid musical work called 'The Seasons.' The child's soul was almost crushed by the vast waves of sound which now rolled over her for the first time, yet Violetta had never been so happy, so strangely affected. She dreamed of 'Spring,' the glow of 'Summer' brought warmth and sunshine, then the sound of the hunter's horns fell merrily on her ear, reminding her of

'Autumn,' and when 'Winter' approached she crept closer and closer to her father. He, however, scarcely remembered the existence of his child, but sat by her side and listened almost breathlessly; his countenance and his great dark eyes seemed as if they had been plunged in a sea of happiness; he laughed and cried by turns. When the music had ceased, he took his child by the hand and silently hurried out of the church. A crowd of men and women, young and old, stood outside, surrounding a slight, elderly-looking man; his countenance was peace itself, and his eyes were heavenly in their expression. 'Father Haydn,' cried many voices. Violetta gazed on him in timid reverence and with streaming eyes. Father Haydn had a friendly word or glance and a warm pressure of the hand for every one; smiles were constantly on his lips; cheerfulness and gentle mirth were seen in his clear expressive countenance. Then Violetta's father, in his simple black attire, pressed through the throng, and before Haydn was aware of his intention, he had seized his hand, crying in a half-stifled voice, 'Thanks, Father Haydn!' and Haydn had pressed his hand, smiled, and nodded to him. Violetta had seen all this, yet almost every day she must listen to her father's account of the great event, which, like a bright star, illumined his whole life. 'If I were to see my king again,' he would sometimes say, 'I should die of joy; believe me, my darling. It seemed as if my heart must break when I held his glorious, creating hand in my own.'

One day, when the lime-trees and the roses were blossoming, and the village had arrayed itself in its most beautiful attire, Violetta, as sometimes happened,

was sitting in the garden, absorbed in day-dreams, while her father sat reading in the summer-house. Suddenly a lively song was heard from the other side of the garden fence, and a bright, merry face, belonging to a tall young man, peeped over the thick hedge, close to where the blooming Violetta was seated. The young man, who seemed much fatigued, carried in his hand a small portfolio and a heavy stick, he wore a small black hat, and a quantity of chestnut hair hung somewhat untidily about his head; on his shoulder sat a tame starling.

'Dear, lovely maiden, let me in!' entreated the stranger, and his blue eyes were yet more imploring than his words.

Without, however, awaiting any other answer than that which Violetta's smile afforded, he cleared the hedge by a powerful spring. The old cantor came up hastily, while Violetta laughed until the bright tears ran down her cheeks, for as the young man took this 'Salto Mortale,' he had dropped his portfolio; music-paper and pencils flew about in all directions, the starling cried, 'Misfortunes never come alone!' and chattered all kinds of nonsense in the Italian language.

The bold leaper held out his hand to the cantor, saying,—

'Dear papa, you see before you a young student of music from Vienna, who has wandered about the whole day with the intention of stealing melodies from the wood-birds; but my negociator, here'—pointing to the starling, which gazed at him with knowing eyes—'has shamefully deceived me, eaten up all my provision of bread, and frightened away the loveliest

songsters with his silly chatter. I beseech you, therefore, to resolve the everlasting, unbearable minor scales of a hungry appetite into a powerful "Ess-dur."'

This cheerful speech much delighted the old cantor; he dragged his merry guest into the summer-house, and Violetta brought new bread, splendid milk and butter, cherries, and strawberries. The young man and his starling did not hesitate to enjoy this good fare; they ate and drank as if for a wager, and talked in proportion. When the stranger made a joke, the starling repeated it, and in the intervals he cried: 'Hola! Figaro, attention! Figaro, attention!'

In the course of an hour the inmates of the little white house were on as good terms with their guest as if they had lived with him for years; the old cantor even began to tell him an anecdote of Meister Bach, and found in the young student a most attentive listener. At last the old man opened the inmost recesses of his heart before the cheerful, simple-minded student, and, mysteriously, as though he were about to reveal some splendid treasure, he related his favourite history, how Father Haydn had pressed his hand. The student listened with a quiet smile, but when the old man had concluded his narrative, he, in his turn related, with a trembling voice and glistening eyes, that Father Haydn had even kissed him. The cantor, however, could not believe it, although the starling cried as if beside himself, 'The truth, the truth, and if it were a crime!'

They took leave of one another by the light of the moon and stars, and then, for the first time, it occurred to the kind-hearted old man to inquire the student's name.

'My name is Amadeus,' was the answer; 'and I shall very often come and see you.'

'Do so!' laughed the cantor, and shook his hand; 'you shall see my collection of music, it is a real treasury, I can tell you.'

Violetta presented the handsome student with a beautiful bouquet of roses; he kissed her in return, as lightly as a butterfly kisses a lovely flower; the starling cried,—

'So lebet wohl, wir wollen gehn,
Lebt wohl, lebt wohl, auf Wiedersehn.'

And so they departed; but long did those they left behind hear the merry voices of a man and a starling, uniting in a pleasant duet.

Four days had scarcely passed when the youth again came leaping over the hedge; this time, however, he was not weary and exhausted, but sprightly and vigorous. Violetta rejoiced when she saw him; he unceremoniously folded her in his arms and kissed her beautiful lips, while the starling cried, 'He who has found his own dear love!'

How pleased was the cantor to see his young friend again. He mysteriously led him to his little room, unlocked an old chest, and Amadeus beheld with astonishment a collection of the most valuable works of Sebastian Bach, Handel, Palestrina, Pergolese, and others; a few of Father Haydn's masses were also there. Each work was neatly bound, and on the cover was printed in gold letters the name of the composer and the date of his birth. Amadeus' countenance expressed his delight as he turned over the leaves of the thick volumes, and, to the great surprise

of the cantor, he seemed well acquainted with all their contents. He conversed on all subjects with wonderful clearness and sagacity, a ray of enthusiasm illuminating his pleasing features. The old cantor took off his cap, laid his hand on the student's shoulder, gazed long and steadily upon him, and said,—

'You have a good, noble heart, and, if God spare you, will one day become a great musician!'

As he spoke these words he embraced him, kissing him on both cheeks, while the starling cried, 'Long live Sarastro.'

Then Amadeus played, and the old spinet trembled under his powerful fingers; sweet melodies lulled Violetta's soul and her father's. When the evening drew near they went into the garden, and the student ran races with Violetta; they pelted each other with flowers and rose-leaves, and played like two children with the clever starling. Amadeus told Violetta how fond he was of the bird, and that he would never part with it. His deceased mother had trained the starling and given it to him, and now it was his constant companion day and night. In the evening it perched itself upon its master's pillow, drew its head under its wing, and slept until day-light.

The summer passed on, but not a week expired without a visit from Amadeus. He came to sing with Violetta, for she could sing all kinds of melodies in her sweet musical voice, to chat about Sebastian Bach with the old cantor, and to relate anecdotes of Father Haydn. Violetta's father once said to Amadeus,—

'Tell me what you think of Mozart, whose works are now becoming so famous; I should much like to hear something about him.'

'Well, then,' answered the young man, 'I know him very well, as well as I know myself, therefore I may be able to give you the most reliable information. Mozart is a gay, jolly fellow; he resembles me in appearance; but he is more serious when he is holding the conductor's bâton, or the pen. He is as happy as a child, and desires nothing but good; his soul floats in an ocean of melodious sounds, in which he delights; the world smiles upon him, and his heart is the merriest and the most careless on earth. He likes good wine, but admires, above all things, the pretty face of a young girl; he is also fond of flowers and butterflies; I am sure you would like him, for he has no enemies. He has a wife whom he fondly loves, and who deserves all his affection, for she has few faults; but she is jealous, and that sometimes worries the wild Mozart.'

The cantor shook his head laughingly; but Amadeus bade him a hasty farewell, although he had scarcely been with him an hour, and the sun was yet high in the heavens.

'"Don Juan," one of Mozart's operas, is to be performed to-night,' he said; 'and I should like to know how it will please the public. I am of a restless disposition, and Mozart himself could not be more excited than I am this evening. To-morrow I will tell you about it.'

The starling had scarcely time to cry, 'The more haste the less speed,' for his master not only forgot to kiss Violetta, he even left her bouquet behind. The girl hung her head all that day; whether this was caused by the forgotten kiss or the faded bouquet is more than I can tell.

The next day passed; no Amadeus appeared. The

sun sank lower and lower, and the yellow leaves fell from the trees. The old cantor sat in his arm-chair absorbed in his musical treasures, Violetta was singing to herself in a low tone of voice, for she did not seem as light-hearted as usual, when a knock was heard at the window, and a clear, well-known voice pleaded for admittance. Violetta rose hastily, and, well-accustomed to the student's pranks, threw open the window, when the young man sprang into the room

'Dear papa,' he said, his countenance bright as a spring morning, 'Mozart has done his work well; "Don Juan" is really not so bad. Mozart sends his compliments to you, and something else too, which I will bring you presently. But first accept a little remembrance of me.' He laid a neat little roll of music paper in the hands of his old friend, who discovered it to be an 'Ave Verum.' To Violetta he gave a small sheet of paper with the inscription, 'To my Violet.' It was a little song, the first words of which were,—

'Ein Veilchen auf der Wiese stand.'

The maiden uttered an exclamation of delight, while the old man's serious eyes attentively perused every page of the manuscript; he then rose, went silently to his music cabinet, and carefully placed the book between the works of Bach and Handel. The youth's merry face quivered in silent emotion as the cantor stretched out both hands to him, saying,—

'You best know what that means!'

Then Amadeus' blue eyes filled with tears; with passionate eagerness he seized the cantor's hand, crying,—

'Father, I am Mozart, the wild, merry Mozart! By that simple mark of esteem you have given me deeper, more heart-felt pleasure than the world's applause could ever bestow. I thank you, but I have yet another pleasure in store for you.'

He threw himself into the arms of the delighted cantor, embraced him tenderly, and hurried out of the cottage. A moment later his beaming face again appeared; the starling cried, 'Long live Sarastro!' and enter—Father Haydn.

A ray of delight from the eyes of the old cantor and the tremulous emotion of his lips were the sole welcome he gave to his king and master. His feeble frame was unable to bear the emotions of his soul, and as Haydn, stretching out his hand to the cantor, said with a peaceful smile: 'God bless you,' while Mozart bent anxiously over him, and Violetta apprehensively clasped her father's knees, God beckoned, and the cantor's soul soared aloft to the regions of eternal, heavenly harmony.

Many, many years have passed since that evening. Father Haydn has long become conductor of the glorious angel-choirs in heaven, and Mozart is sleeping his long, deep sleep beneath the cool earth. These and many other bright stars have faded from our sight; but the little village still lies in its calm loveliness among the thick foliage, the scent of the lime-trees is sweet as of yore, and an aged woman, the once charming, lovely Violetta, lives alone in the cantor's cottage. She never married, and now lives a life of dreams and reminiscences. But if you like to pay her a visit, you have only to ask about Meister Mozart, then you will

see her eyes sparkle and a ray as of youth and happiness spread itself over her features. She will talk of him by the hour, and at last perhaps she will show you a small sheet of paper, yellow with age, on which a hasty hand has traced the words,—

'Ein Veilchen auf der Wiese stand.'

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

'Lächelnd nickte mir die Königin,
Lächelnd im Vorüberreiten.
Galt das meiner neuen Liebe
Oder sollt' es *Tod* bedeuten?'

A BEAUTIFUL, mild summer evening spread its light veil over the richly adorned earth, the moon was smiling as sweetly and peacefully as the tear-bedewed eye of some blissful loving maiden; the flowers could not slumber while this gaze rested upon them, and the leaves on the trees conversed in whispers. The rays of the moon seemed to fall with especial brightness on a magnificent lime-tree which stood in the centre of a large gloomy garden. Many tall trees of solemn beauty stood around, flowers of all hues peeped out from among the low bushes, and in the centre of the garden, near the lime-tree, was a splendid velvety lawn; through the thick green branches might be caught a glimpse of the white walls of a stately mansion. It was midnight, the birds and butterflies were sleeping, but here and there might be seen a glow-worm, who, having been

long detained in attendance upon the lovely Queen of Roses, was now returning homewards, while, his mind filled with recollections of his love, he hastened to embrace all the flowers who mockingly call him by name.

A light, rapid footstep broke the stillness of the night, and the tall slender form of a young man approached the lime-tree. His forehead was lofty, and wore a thoughtful expression; his eyes were of remarkable brilliancy. The blossoms on the tree breathed forth their sweetest perfumes as he drew near, and the leaves hastily crowded together, so that the searching eye of the moon might not be prevented from beholding her favourite. The youth gazed dreamily up into the clear blue vault of heaven, and the stars as they gazed down on him could read in his eyes a thousand solemn questions; thoughtfully he glanced at the deep shadows which the trees were pitilessly casting on the bright flower-beds, and sighed mournfully.

Suddenly was heard from afar a faint musical sound, like the softest breath of a zyphyr caressing an Æolian harp, and a soft light rose slowly from the dark green grass. Thin, shapeless mists, shining like silver, spread themselves around, and the delightful perfume of lilies and roses filled the air. Countless tiny libellulæ, of whom it is said that their life endures but for a single night, came, borne on their bright green wings, to form a close circle round the lawn. The sweet sounds grew louder and louder, a stream of most enchanting, ever-varying melodies poured down on all around, now in merry sportiveness, now sad, plaintive, and mournful, but ever fascinating and inviting. A number of the most beautiful rose-leaves now sank to the ground, and from behind each leaf appeared a fairy-like figure of

indescribable loveliness, of truly angelic beauty. These figures had beaming eyes, long golden hair, and were enveloped in veils of dazzling brightness. Every movement of these lovely beings produced a sound, every breath was a tone, and when they joined hands for the merry dance, the heart of the trembling youth to whom it was granted to behold this wondrous sight, seemed as if it must break from very rapture. The beautiful features of the listener grew brighter and brighter, an unearthly radiance streamed from his eyes, and a smile of delight played upon his countenance. Ah! they were returning, then, those happy dreams of his childhood; all the lovely forms which his youthful imagination had pictured were now passing before him, nodding and smiling; the golden land of fairies, long vanished from his sight, now arose in all its former glory and splendour.

Then a peal of silvery bells drew his eyes upwards, a faint rustling sound was heard, and a throne formed of a pure lily floated down, surrounded by innumerable airy figures, half concealed in the corollas of lovely unknown flowers. The whole structure was suspended, as by fine silver chains, from two moonbeams, and swung hither and thither. The blades of grass eagerly stretched forth their little green arms to receive with becoming gentleness the fairies' throne; the insect guardians of the lawn fluttered their green wings to salute and welcome their queen, producing a sound like the murmuring of harps. The queen forsook her throne, and with the point of her tiny foot touched the grassy carpet. You could not imagine any being more lovely, more enchanting than this queen of elves, for that was her title in the land of

fairies. She wore a coronet made of the tears of flowers, which glittered more brightly than the most costly diamonds; her veil was light, her smile was bliss, and her eye heaven itself. She raised her delicate hand, bowed her head, and the dance commenced. What enchanting floating and soaring! what graceful flights! what sweet tender embraces! The queen, her glittering wings outspread, joined in the revels, smiling and singing. All the flowers far and near opened wide their eyes, each blossom breathed perfume and melody. Oh, what a wondrous scene was this!

Even the solitary youth behind the lime-tree was deeply impressed by all he witnessed; his heart seemed almost crushed by the weight of happiness which had fallen upon it; a deep sigh, a whispered 'Ah!' called forth by the very excess of delight, escaped from his lips. It was as if a sudden gust of wind had scattered the fairy forms before him; in terror and confusion they flew apart; but the queen beckoned to her conpanions, and sadly, even solemnly, pointed towards the lime-tree, which the moon had covered with a thousand threads of silvery light. The elves drew their veils around them and crowded nearer to the trembling youth, whose right arm encircled the stem of the tree, as if this steadfast friend who had sheltered his beloved parents and their forefathers must also have power to protect him from the might of a fairy world. The queen floated towards him.

'Thou art condemned to die'—thus she sang—'thou well-beloved, richly-gifted child of earth! The decree is firm and unrelenting; no mortal may presume, unpunished, to behold the land of spirits. Thou shalt now die, but thy end shall be sudden, wonderful, calm

like the fading of a star which is to rise again more beautiful, more glorious. Thou art chosen from among the thousands and ten thousands of thy fellow men; the holy Goddess Music, to whom all spirits in heaven and earth do render homage, has sanctified thee by her embrace. The star of happiness shed its rays over thy cradle; thou wert named 'Felix,' and in this name lies the symbol of thy whole destiny. Thou shalt be happy—gloriously happy—beloved, admired, nay worshipped; and at last,—oh thrice blessed child of earth!—thou shalt pass away in the midst of thy fame, of thy splendour, of thy glory, and a well-beloved, pure being shall go before thee, to receive from thy lips thy departing soul at the last moment of thine existence. Oh, bless thy fate, beloved mortal!'

As the sound of her words died away, the queen once more bowed her head, but so low that the tear of a flower detached itself from her coronet and fell on the pale forehead of the dreamer. She then, her sweetest smile on her lips, cast a farewell glance upon him, and softly whispered, 'Good-night!' The elves sprang lightly past him, each one playfully casting a small keepsake towards the half-unconscious youth, the one a little needle formed of the rays of the moon, another a strangely-formed moss blossom, or a lily of the valley, or a veil formed of the brightness of the sky at evening, at the same time singing, 'Good-night! good-night!' Throne, queen, dancers, perfume, light and music—all had vanished; the youth sank to the ground in a swoon.

When he again opened his eyes the sun was shining brightly, kissing his lofty forehead, and secretly wondering at the pale features of his favourite. The

birds were singing, the flowers were bathing themselves in dew, and gazed bashfully and timidly towards him; the leaves of the ancient trees had many secrets to relate, the frivolous butterflies hurried to their favourite flowers, and, with many a jest and fond embrace, extracted from their sweet lips the secrets of the past night. A few old black beetles ran grumbling about the lawn; they raised the thin blades of grass, and had much to arrange. The old gardener, however, soon perceived, with many a shake of his head, a curious white circle, which surrounded the lawn; it was formed of the corpses of the little winged guardians of fairy-land.

As Felix wandered through the garden, his countenance was animated by the purest, loftiest inspiration; with hasty steps he sought his silent chamber, and concealed himself from the eyes of all his loved ones. When at last he re-entered the family circle, he smiled significantly as he laid a roll of music paper in the hands of his beloved eldest sister, his companion and friend.

'Fanny,' said he, 'these pages will relate to you a "Midsummer Night's Dream" of your Felix, listen to them patiently a little while!'

The prophecy of the queen of elves was fulfilled. The glorious, honoured, beloved musician who dreamed that sweet 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' so full of enchanting melody, has forsaken our poor earth. Not a leaf of the laurel wreath which encircled his youthful brow was withered; his life-inspiring eyes were closed in the full consciousness of his power, in the untroubled splendour of his fame.

And we can only kneel at the coffin of our never-

forgotten one. We gaze in heartfelt sorrow and with many a bitter tear at those still, calm features, and, in timid reverence, touch for the last time the now idle hand which in life knew no rest, which has created and called forth so much that is great and noble. How soon did that glorious soul flee away from the discords of our earth! how soon did it soar aloft to the bright home of all harmonies! There all his visions become reality,—blissful reality! there the longings of his mighty soul are satisfied.

We, too, are awakening, but we awake to comfortless truth; how suddenly has all around us become wintry, sad, and desolate! The throne stands vacant, the harp is mute, the Goddess of Music mourns, weeping and bowed down by anguish, and thousands upon thousands of human eyes gaze up into the lofty, solemn heaven. Alas! it has no answer to their bitter, sorrowful 'Wherefore?'

A PROPHECY.

In the centre of Upper Lusatia, part of the beautiful land of Saxony, lies the pretty village called Jonsdorf. Its white houses, with the red roofs, looking over rich meadows and extensive bleaching grounds, give it a cheerful appearance, and it might be compared to a peasant maiden in her Sunday array; but eighty years ago (and this is the time of the events recorded in our little history) it bore far more resemblance to a beggar child sitting by the roadside. A few poverty-stricken

houses lay scattered around, while a small church stood as if keeping guard over them; these were surrounded by a thick dark forest of fir trees; in short, the aspect of the entire landscape was melancholy and desolate. One spot alone seemed bright and cheerful; this was a green meadow near the village. It belonged to the most industrious and prudent man in Jonsdorf, and was at that time the only place far and wide used for the purpose.

One afternoon in May, this meadow presented a cheerful, lively scene; young maidens were, with many a laugh and jest, spreading out their homespun yarn upon the grass, in the bright sunshine. Each girl was attired in a short dark woollen skirt, a black bodice, with neat white cuffs turning up at the wrist, a coloured hankerchief tightly pinned across the chest, and a large coarse hat; and carried on her arm a small green bucket. Maria Hänïsch, the daughter of the proprietor, as lovely a flower as ever blossomed in Saxony—where beautiful girls are said to grow as plentifully as weeds in other countries—was unquestionably the fairest among the assembled maidens. She had received the name of "Goldmarie," on account of the long fair hair which reached to the knees of its owner, now in her sixteenth year. A faithful description of the village rose who ruled all hearts and whose charms had turned the head of many a sturdy youth, might be given as follows. She was tall, well-formed, and slender, had good blue eyes, rosy cheeks, a saucy little turned-up nose, and a small laughing mouth. This universal favourite was certainly no wonderful specimen of wisdom or of extraordinary talent; she was only good, remarkably good. She

would not injure the smallest animal, much less a human being; she would give away all she had, even the bread she was about to eat; she was a pious, harmless girl, a dutiful, industrious daughter; since her mother's death, the only support and stay of her father. Any one who now watched her, as she sported and jested with her companions, or laughingly sprinkled them with water, and heard her joyful, clear voice, singing her merry songs, would have been compelled to rejoice with her, and to whisper, 'God bless and keep thee, dear maiden!'

The work was finished, and the girls thought of returning homewards. They gathered spring flowers and then seated themselves to consume the remains of their evening meal. The first dark shades of night were falling on the lively group, when an ugly old woman emerged from the pine-wood. Her foreign costume, her dirty yellow turban, and her fiery black eyes betrayed the descendant of those strange, restless tribes from the Bohemian woods—the gipsies. The maidens ceased to laugh, cast anxious glances at one another, and drew closer together.

'Give me a drink from your jug,' said the old woman, her countenance imploring, but her voice proud in its tone; 'I have walked far, have yet far to go, and I am so thirsty.'

As she spoke, her withered fingers pointed to the half-emptied jug of milk which had just been passed from one rosy mouth to another. The girls, however, timidly cried,—

'No, no, we will not drink with you, it would bring us ill luck!' and one of them hastily seized the jug, spreading her apron over it. Goldmarie alone had said

nothing; she now arose, and, with an angry glance, tore the jug from her companion, then turned to the gipsy and said,—

'There, drink, poor woman, and God's blessing be upon you.'

The old woman received the pitcher with a strange smile, took a long draught, and whispered as she gave back the jug,—

'You shall hear your fortune in return for your compassion. Your hand, dear child?'

The blushing maiden stretched out her powerful hand; the gipsy examined it carefully, observed its lines, shook her grey head significantly, and at last muttered in a sort of chant the following words:—

'Thou hast not yet a suitor, but soon shalt be a bride; a tailor bold shall thy husband be, but he neither shall stitch nor mend. Thy first-born son shall a general be, yet weapons he never shall wear; he shall govern and rule by a glance or a sign, to your hearts shall he happiness bear. Thy second son——'

'Himmelkreuzschockmilliondonnerwetterrr!' A never-ending invective was shouted close behind them. Goldmarie started back with a loud scream, her father stood before her. He was a short, broad-shouldered man, with a brown, good-humoured countenance; he carried a pipe in his mouth, wore a short jacket and breeches and a broad-brimmed hat, under which his grey hair fell down to his shoulders.

'Will you hold your tongue, you old witch!' he shouted, 'and stop filling the girl's head with your nonsense! As if I should throw her away upon a tailor, who does not even understand his business! And the eldest son is to be a *soldier?* Rubbish! she

shall marry a bleacher, and no one else, and the boy shall be a bleacher too; there's an end of it. We shall see who is in the right, an old vagabond of a witch or I, Johann Gottlob Hänïsch, of Jonsdorf. And now, home with you, girls!'

The young people gathered together and departed hastily. Goldmarie furtively looked around for the old gipsy, but she had disappeared. The father, however, grumbled unceasingly the whole way home, and even until he retired to rest.

It was the year 1794. Ten years had passed since that May evening, since the gipsy's prophecy. Where was the lovely Maria?

We may find her in the village of Alt-Gersdorf, near Zittau, as the wife of the cantor and schoolmaster, Johann Gottlob *Schneider*. He was extremely talented, and played the organ so well that the women would weep when they heard him in church, and the men would wait to press his hand after the service. Many even went so far as to assert that his playing did more good than the parson's sermons; but this was only whispered in the ear. The fortunate cantor had by his playing gained the greatest treasure he possessed, his dear, faithful wife, Maria Hänïsch, of Jonsdorf. She was on a visit to his aunt in Zittau when, one Sunday, the schoolmaster, Johann Gottlob Schneider, of Neuwaltersdorf (near her native village), played the organ in the place of the town cantor, who had been attacked by a sudden and severe illness. When the service was concluded the congregation dispersed; but the schoolmaster again seated himself at the organ, and sent up a melodious prayer for the recovery of his

sick friend. Ah! a tuneful petition such as this seems to have mightier wings than those of any other prayer and to fly straightway into heaven. This time, however, the touching petition was not heard only by God and his angels; a rosy maiden still knelt praying in the church; her soul seemed borne up to heaven, and her innocent heart was for ever given to one who had carried her so far away from earth. Then followed a season of tears, and of silent heartaches, for secret love always brings much sorrow; but the kind aunt knew what course to take, and brought about a meeting between the two, when the cantor's affections soon burst into bright flame. But now came a new trouble, for Maria's father would not hear of a son-in-law who was not only a musician, but even bore the name of Schneider, thus reminding him of the gipsy's prophecy, and not until the cantor was enabled to prove some distant business connections did he give his consent to the marriage.

Schneider, be it known, had once been a ticking-weaver; but his passion for music had induced him to exchange his loom for an organ bench. He was almost worshipped in his village; the children who were his pupils carefully observed every glance of his gentle eyes, obeying him more readily than their parents, while he loved them almost as dearly as his own children. He had three sons, but the eldest, the very image of his grandfather, was the pride of his heart. The old man would have insisted that the boy should become a bleacher; but the parents were not of the same opinion. His mother secretly gazed after every soldier who strutted through the village, joyfully remembering the gipsy's words; his

father had very different ideas on the subject, but he never spoke of them to any one. During the summer months Maria always went with her child to visit her father at Jonsdorf, where Hänïsch took little Christian Friedrich to the bleaching ground, at first even carrying him there, and laid him on the grass, where the bright sun-light fell on him, and the light-hearted maidens sprinkled him with water. The old man was much delighted with the sturdy little fellow's laughter, struggles, and screams.

'He shall be my heir,' he would say, with a smile; 'all my trouble and labour will not have been in vain!'

His Christmas presents to the boy consisted only of such toys as had reference to bleaching, and nothing could have pleased him better than to take sole charge of this first-born son if the parents would have consented to such an arrangement. When in course of time two other sons were born, the summer visits to Jonsdorf were discontinued; but the grandfather insisted that Christian Friedrich, who had always been and still remained his favourite, should often come over and see him.

Schneider, however, secretly found much pleasure in the musical talents of his children; with wonderful patience and perseverance he instructed them in thorough-bass and pianoforte playing, and when his eldest son, who had then scarcely attained his eighth year, presented him on Christmas Eve with the first musical composition he had ever committed to paper, the cantor retired to his chamber and fell upon his knees, while with streaming eyes he offered thanks to God for the great joy vouchsafed to him. He now

instructed the intelligent boy in the art of performing on the organ, made him acquainted with the construction of the violin, clarionet, oboe, and viola, teaching him to perform on these instruments (also on the bassoon, horn, and flute, and allowing him to instruct his younger brothers. Thus prepared he sent the boy in his twelfth year to the Gymnasium at Zittau. He procured for his son lodgings in the house of a shoemaker, and strongly recommended him to the music director and organist, Meyer, also to his assistant, Flaschner. But this testimony was not needed to draw their attention to a pupil who displayed such remarkable musical talent. In a short time Friedrich became leader of the choir; besides this, he practised as conductor, gave many music-lessons, and in his spare moments composed to his heart's content. The modest village youth soon became a welcome guest at the houses of the most distinguished families; his playing gave general satisfaction, and all were delighted with his talents and his zeal. Soon no musical entertainment could take place without him, and the most satisfactory reports spread even to the quiet cottage of the Alt-Gersdorf cantor, bringing with them bright sunshine. Thence they travelled to Jonsdorf, and came to the ears of the honest bleacher, who, however would not listen to them, and expressed his opinion that the boy was but wasting time with such nonsense; he was much too strong and powerful for a musician. When the holidays came the student returned to his beloved home, related to his father all he had heard and learned, and played new sacred melodies to his mother and brothers. Those were days of rejoicing to the

cantor's family; the holidays were as one continuous Christmas day. The merry, vigorous youth then betook himself to the house of his grandfather at Jonsdorf, and conscientiously devoted the remainder of his vacation to playing the bleacher.

Thus passed days, months, and years, until one day a messenger arrived at Alt-Gersdorf, bringing from the Musical Society of Zittau to the Schneider family a formal invitation to a grand concert on the following Sunday evening. When Sunday came, the whole family, father, mother, brothers, and grandfather started on their two hours' walk to Zittau. It was evening when they arrived, and without delay, without rest or refreshment, the expectant pedestrians entered the concert-room and modestly seated themselves in a corner, while the father gazed uneasily around, seeking his Friedrich.

An overture by Cherubini now rushed along on mighty wings of sound. Who was the conductor? The cantor saw, and with a start of joyful surprise, recognized a timid, modest young man—Friedrich Schneider of Alt-Gersdorf. He showed no signs of confusion as he took his place at the conductor's desk; his beat was firm and sure, the glance of his eye grave and steady. Then came a mass by Lotti, faultlessly performed; and finally the youthful conductor seated himself at the piano, and played three sonatas of his own composition. Loud shouts of applause greeted the performer, but the cantor had clasped his hands together, he could no longer see his son, standing in the orchestra, the lights, which seemed divided into a thousand bright dots, danced and trembled before him, but not only his eyes, his whole heart swam in tears

of joy. The brothers glanced at each other with a happy smile, while the gentle Maria bent down to her father and whispered in a trembling voice,—

'Did you see *how* he ruled, our son? I now understand the gipsy's prophecy. Ah! he is a true general, our Friedrich, God bless him!'

And Johann Gottlob Hänïsch murmured in deep emotion,—

'Well, then, I acknowledge that she was right!'

This was the commencement of Friedrich Schneider's fame; those three sonatas, the firstfruits of his creating genius, were soon published as Opus 1 by Breitkopf and Härtel of Leipzic, receiving universal praise, even from the most severe musicians. In the year 1805 Schneider entered the university of Leipzic, where he gained the esteem and affection of Schicht (the celebrated cantor of the Thomas School), and the friendship of many distinguished men. He soon became sole director of Schicht's Academy of Singing, and received the appointment of teacher of singing at the Plato free school. In the year 1807 he first became organist of the University Church; two years later we find him director of the Seconda Opera Company; and finally he became musicial director of the town theatre. He now laboured unceasingly and with great success: he retained the post of organist, the organ-bench still remaining his favourite seat, and sacred music being the real field of his labours. Having written many masses and organ compositions, he suddenly, by the production in 1819 of his oratorio 'Das Weltgericht,' entered the ranks of the most celebrated sacred composers of all times. The first performance of this im-

portant work, created under the full influence of inspiration, procured for him that peaceful retreat in pleasant Dessau which was destined, by God's decree, to be his last resting-place. Under the protection of an art-loving prince, he composed his later works, the oratorios, 'The Flood,' 'Pharoah,' 'The Child Christ.' 'Gethsemane and Golgotha,' 'Gideon and Absalom;' also his beautiful hymn-tunes, psalms, and masses.

Friedrich Schneider was also eminently sucessful in his secular compositions. He wrote symphonies, sonatas, songs, and cantatas, also several overtures, in which he introduced well-known melodies, such as the 'Dessau March,' 'God Save the Queen,' and 'Gaudeamus.' Enthusiastic applause was his portion, his works were performed everywhere, generally conducted by the composer himself; Friedrich Schneider's name was of great renown. Yes, he had become a ruler, the son of the lovely Maria—not only ruler of counter-point and commander of the orchestra and chorus, but a wise and mighty monarch in the kingdom of sound.

Who would not have seen him, the noble Meister Friedrich Schneider, who now rests with God? Who would not have seen him as he stood at the conductor's desk, his hand with the bâton uplifted, his commanding gaze fixed on the musicians? Who would not remember his countenance, surrounded by his long grey hair—his curious complexion of a reddish-brown hue? This peculiar colouring of his features was an enduring memorial of his worthy grandfather's bleaching-fields at 'Hänischmühe,' in Jonsdorf.

CHRISTMAS IN THE FOREST.

Is there on earth a more melodious language (the sweet whispered conversation of two lovers excepted) than the rustling of the fresh green foliage in a beautiful forest? Truly the heart of the gayest, most thoughtless wanderer is softened, and he pauses, reluctant to pass onward, when, on a glorious spring day, the young brightly-arrayed trees are trembling with joy as they converse with one another, when all around is whispering and rustling. The wanderer then sinks down among the grass, so that the sweet-scented waves meet above his head, the lovely flowers bend to kiss his lips, and he gazes up into the green and leafy canopy above him, dreaming of his home, of his parents, and of the bright eyes of his loved one. The stately oak-tree is holding lover-like intercourse with the lovely birch, the slender beech makes many important communications to the solemn elm, and the ever restless aspen chatters unceasingly. Life and joy are in the forest, bringing gladness to the eye and happy emotions to the heart of man.

Amidst the luxuriant verdure, however, there stands a gloomy, silent tree, who never converses, never plays with bright green leaves It is the fir, with his sharp little needles. He lovingly stretches forth his arms; no envy dwells in his breast; but his gaze is ever sorrowful. As a man oppressed by deep grief stands in a crowd of sportive children, so stands the fir among the trees of the forest. Seldom does a bird pause in its flight through the woods to rest upon his branches; the fresh green leaves have irresistible

attractions, promising shade and shelter from the heat. Neither do the bees and golden beetles seek the 'Fir-tree Inn;' in the spring it stands forsaken, forsaken it still remains during the bright summer, even in autumn the fir-tree alone wears the garb of mourning. He mourns for the trees, arrayed in their many-coloured foliage, whose splendour cannot protect them against the death-kiss. Then comes winter, in his robe of glittering ice, attended by his servants, the stormy winds; they pitilessly tear down all the tender leaves, while the Snow Prince hastily scatters thick white flakes over the whole earth, chilling all living things by his gaze. The fir alone, with a mysterious smile, gazes fearlessly upon him, for the ice-robed magician has no power over him. God, who in His great mercy gives to all His creatures, from man down to the smallest beetle in his mossy bed, some great joy or some season of undisturbed happiness, has prepared for the patient, silent fir-tree a reward delightful as sunshine or the breath of spring.

In the night of the 24th December, that night of which the ancient sacred books relate so much that is wonderful, that night which we call 'Christmas Eve,' and, our hearts glowing with childlike joy, celebrate in the arms of those we love, an angel decends to the silent fir-tree, kisses him, and adorns him with wonderful white flowers. Thus the tree, trembling in unspeakable joy, is consecrated, thus is it chosen from among all the trees of the forest, to prepare a joyful Christmas feast for those birds and other small creatures who were unable to escape from the clutches of the cruel Snow Prince, and who are held captive and watchfully guarded. At midnight a heart-stirring

melody pours forth from the branches of the fir, a song of wondrous power, like an echo from ages long past. And these tones penetrate through the forest; all birds hear the alluring sound, and cannot resist its influence; they raise their wings and flutter towards the singing tree; the half-frozen beetles and slumbering flies, all, all awake, shake from their wings the heavy winter sleep, and, half-consciously, half-dreamily, follow the sounds. The wretched songsters which we men confine in narrow prisons that they may cheer us with their glad voices, they also hear the magic summons, utter plaintive cries, and wound their tender wings as, longing for liberty, they flutter against the cruel bars of their prison. The human ear, deaf to the wondrous, fascinating song of the fir-tree, listens in surprise to the cry of anguish which escapes from the breast of the little prisoner, and here and there a child, wakeful after the exciting pleasures of Christmas Eve, will compassionately steal to the cage of its favourite, gazing upon him with timid, loving eyes.

Those lights called 'Will of the Wisp,' wearied by the malicious tricks in which during the autumn they had chiefly delighted, were sleeping in the caverns, but they now arise, and, dancing through the wood, form a close circle round the fir, who, glowing in the rosy light, continues his song, The snow-flakes glitter like countless tears of joy, the lights dance and float around, borne aloft by the wondrous melody. The yellow-hammer, the tit-mouse, the cross-bill, solemn old ravens with their children, talkative crows and magpies, careless sparrows,—all celebrate here their Christmas feast, listening silently and with half-closed

eyes, dreaming of sunlight and the perfume of flowers. Then the fir-tree suddenly shakes his branches, and delicious seeds of all kinds, charming little fruits, lovely flowers formed of snow-flakes, fall and float down upon the crowd, charming Christmas gifts for all. Oh, how they rejoice, those happy birds, as they press round the fir-tree, caressing and thanking him! The tender yellow-hammer and tit-mouse joyfully chirp their thanks, the sparrows wish to express their gratitude, but their beaks are filled with all kinds of dainties; the ravens and the wild crossbills shower upon the fir-tree all kinds of passionate, loving greetings, until he is almost deafened by their clamour; the beetles and flies hum their song of gratitude, and the moss trembles under the snow as if spring had breathed upon it; the leafless trees shake their heads, sigh, and tears seem to drop from their branches. The tall pines, however, may join in the song of the blissfully happy fir, and God from His throne on high smiles upon the happy Christmas in the forest.

"*STABAT MATER DOLOROSA.*"

'VEDERE Napoli e poi morire!'

It was a bright morning in the month of October, 1735. How could the truth of the proverb we have quoted fail to strike upon the hearts of those before whose gaze lay the glorious scenery of Naples? There lay the fairy city, with its cupolas and towers, above which hung the bright golden veil of early morning.

There towered the mightiest of all cupolas, the cloud-capped summit of Vesuvius. And the beautiful gulf, —it lay upon the proud earth like a gigantic dew-drop fallen from the sea of light above, glittering as its waters moved in the bright sunlight. A warm, reddish mist encircled the thick groves of myrtle and orange trees, sported with the light tendrils of the vines, which, joining their green hands, floated in a gladsome dance through the neighbouring gardens, and kissed the flowers and creeping plants which covered the ground like many-coloured network. It seemed as if God's Spirit rested over this sweetest spot of His earth, as if eternal peace, happiness, and beauty must alone inhabit this lovely scene.

On the gentle slope of a blooming hill, half concealed by the luxuriant growth of splendid oleanders, shaded by plane-trees and olives, covered with beautiful magnolias and delicate vine-tendrils, stood an ancient crucifix, and at its foot a statue of the sorrowing Madonna. Perhaps some strange fortunes had brought the group to this retired spot; pious faith had perhaps hoped to preserve the treasure by securing for it that peaceful retreat, for the work was of striking, imposing beauty, and might well have deserved a place in the most stately church. The master hand, able to soften the hard stone, to impart to it life and being, was visible in every limb of the life-sized figures. He who hung upon the cross was a conqueror, not an expiring martyr; His noble features were holy, calm, almost glorified; His beautiful form was rigid in death; nowhere could be found a trace of sorrow, of suffering. But Mary, the Mater Dolorosa, —what a sight was that! A beautiful form, crushed

not bowed down, by the weight of sorrow; a lovely countenance, bearing the shadow of deep woe, the signs of never-ending grief. Stony tear-drops hung, oh! so heavily, from her eyelashes, and around her beautiful lips quivered a sorrow which could find no consolation in heaven or on earth. Fresh green leaves tenderly embraced the robe of the sufferer, and sweet flowers, springing up near the Crucified One, gently covered the scars of His wounds. Seldom did a pious traveller discover the sacred image, seldom did a knee bow before that crucifix.

On the above-mentioned October morning it happened, however, that a pale youth threw himself down before the lonely crucifix. His countenance was grave and showed traces of illness; his dark eyes were weary and sorrowful; his tall figure weak and bowed down. With a deep sigh he gazed up to the cross. He saw the heavenly calm in the countenance of the Saviour, and a shudder of deepest devotion passed over him; he saw Mary's angelic features, saw in them all the intensity of her sorrow, and tremblingly fell back from so immeasurable a woe. Boundless compassion took possession of his soul; it seemed as if he must tear away by force the swords which pierced the mother's heart; the stony tears hanging from her eyelashes seemed to cry aloud for pity. His own grief died away before the intensity of that deep, mute sorrow; his murmurs rushed back to his overflowing heart; he forgot the pangs of his soul, and meekly bowed his head.

Suddenly the sound of a clear, sweet 'Ave Maria,' sung by two lovely female voices, fell upon his ear. The singers were two sisters, whose mother the

Madonna had graciously restored to health, and they were now bringing to the Queen of Heaven their daily offering of flowers. They were handsome girls, the one tall and majestic, with proud glance and glowing cheek, the other fair and delicate, with black eyes and soft, pleasing features. They laid sweet garlands at the foot of the crucifix, offered up a silent prayer, and departed; but the fair-haired maiden secretly cast a farewell glance upon the lonely suppliant.

The youth now gazed upwards, praying in a low voice,—

'Madonna, have pity upon me! I am alone, quite alone, on this beautiful earth, and I suffer! Give me the affection of some loving heart, and heal the pangs of my sorrowful breast!'

It seemed as if a veil had fallen from his imploring eyes; the statue of Mary trembled, a ray of life shone in the countenance of the Mater Dolorosa, and the stony lips breathed the words,—

'Bring a worthy offering to my immeasurable woe. Take away from me these dreadful stony tears! soften them so that they may flow freely, relieving my grief-torn heart! cause my rigid wounds to bleed gently, and thy prayer be heard!'

When the youth at last regained consciousness, the midday sun was shining brightly, and all living things hastened to conceal themselves from its hot, scorching beams. The youth alone heeded them not; his eyes flashed and his cheek glowed, as with hasty steps he hurried back to Naples, a smile of delight beaming in his countenance.

With the clear morning sunlight the lovely sisters returned, singing in childlike piety their 'Ave Maria,'

in which the clear, silvery soprano of the gentle fair-haired Lauretta formed a delightful contrast to the rich alto of the charming brunette. Again they found near the statue the youth with the curling brown hair and thoughtful forehead; this time, however, he was not kneeling before the crucifix, but lay on the slope of the hill, his excited gaze roaming hither and thither while from time to time he traced, with a pencil, curious characters upon a piece of paper which he held in his hand. His countenance, too, was so radiant that the pious, fair-headed Lauretta almost forgot to present to the Madonna her offering of roses, and the fiery Lucia gazed upon him in astonishment. The sisters at length reluctantly departed; but Lauretta secretly let fall at the feet of the stranger her sweet-scented breast-knot of orange blossoms.

Thus did those fair beings meet, each day, in the early morning; neither storms nor the treacherous winter rains had power to check their pilgrimages. The gaze of the blushing Lauretta grew ever longer, softer, and more tender, while the words and tone of her gentle greeting became timid and hesitating; ever increasing delight shone in the youth's thoughtful countenance.

At last came March, that loveliest of months in Italy, with its fresh buds, bright leaves, and warm breezes. Lauretta, however, perceived not that the youth seemed to fade away, despite the quickening breath of spring, that his step was growing heavier, his cheek becoming more hollow; for a beautiful deceptive colour rested upon his features, and his dark eyes glowed with unearthly fire. One day he whispered the request,—

'May I bring you a song to-morrow, a song of praise to the Holy Mother? and will you sing it with your beautiful clear voices, and so help me to offer a sacrifice? Madonna has required the sacrifice from me; she has promised a glorious recompense. Oh! how I long for that reward! Help me to fulfil my vow, sing my hymn next Sunday, at the foot of this crucifix, and you will be witnesses of the wonders which Madonna will work for me!'

Lucia kindly nodded assent to his request; but Lauretta laid her trembling hand in his, and a heavy, burning tear fell from her splendid dark eyes.

It was on the 16th March, on a Sabbath evening, that the three young people again appeared before the crucifix, Lauretta supporting the youth's failing footsteps and carrying on her arm a wreath of violets; the solemn crucifix gazed down on the group. The weary youth threw himself on the ground, and, uplifting his frail hands, cried, in deep agitation and emotion, 'Holy Madonna, receive my offering!'

And near him rose, like sweet incense, the two voices, wondrously clear, solemn, and noble; they sang the words,—

'Stabat Mater dolorosa,
Juxta Crucem lacrimosa,
Dum pendebat Filius.'

No zephyr whispered through the leaves of the trees, not a sound was to be heard; it was a holy stillness, for nature grew dumb before the beauty of that melody, before the true sacredness of those words. Deep, soft sadness trembled in the voices of the two girls, seeming to trickle down in every tone. The

suppliant seemed lost in unspeakable rapture; his eyes were fixed in indescribable agitation, in consuming anxiety, in feverish expectation upon Mary's features, and as the words,

'Quis est homo qui, non fleret,
Christi Matrem si vederet,
In tanto supplicio?'

as the sweet notes, so full of noble compassion, fell from the lips of the inspired singers, behold! the rigid countenance of the Mater Dolorosa relaxed, the unspeakable sorrow was loosened, heavenly emotion shone upon the beautiful features, the heavy stony tears were softened and flowed freely, the wounds of the sword-pierced heart began to bleed, and bright warm tear-drops fell upon the forehead of the worshipper. Then the wild, gnawing pains which had tormented his frail body were stilled; he drew a long breath, and as he sank into a pleasant, gentle swoon, he blissfully stretched forth his arms. Lauretta, in deep anxiety, threw herself down beside him; a smile passed like a ray of sunlight over the countenance of the expiring youth,—GIOVANNI BATTISTA PERGOLESI was dead.

The miraculous statue of the sorrowing Madonna has long since fallen to ruin; jasmine and aloes cover the spot where once it stood, and the remains of the youthful, immortal musician whose faithful soul sang the ever beautiful 'Stabat Mater' rest in the cathedral of Vescorato. At the foot of the hill on which the crucifix once stood lies a small grave; the mound is almost destroyed by the heavy footsteps of time, almost hidden by the flowers which grow above it, and shaded

by mournful cypresses. It covers the pure and loving heart once promised by the Madonna to a pious worshipper, the mortal remains of the fair-headed Lauretta.

THE SORROWS AND JOYS OF BIRDS AND FLOWERS,

> ' Euch, die Ihr's mit dem Herzschlag eingetauscht,
> Euch weiht der Dichter seiner Märchen bestes !
> Doch die ungläubig lächelnd Ihr gelauscht,
> Denkt dass der Wald in Märchen nie gerauscht,
> Und, was der Dichter Euch enthüllt:—vergesst es !
> PUTLITZ, "WAS SICH DER WALD ERZÄHLT."

A YOUNG and happy girl occupied a large handsome apartment; the floor was covered with thick soft carpets, and heavy curtains of crimson silk hung from the lofty windows. That the inhabitant was young and free from care might have been guessed by the many glittering toys which stood or lay on all the tables. Queer-featured China dolls, glass birds, garlands of artificial flowers, and similar articles were preserved, like sacred relics, under glass shades, that the rosy breath of early childhood which still seemed to hang over them might not pass away. Amidst them stood the bust of Schiller, that ideal of all young, blooming hearts; on the piano lay the dance-music of the last ball, Rückert's 'Liebesfrühling,' and a few knots of coloured ribbon, remembrances of the night's merry dance; a canary bird chirped within his glittering cage, flowers were growing in pretty, tinted

pots within a large flower basket which had been placed in the centre of the room. It was eleven o'clock in the morning of a clear sharp winter day; but the atmosphere of the room was hot and sultry; the stove blew out its black cheeks, scattering sparks of fire.

The ivy, the lovely favourite of the woods, now said, softly, as flowers and leaves always speak,—

'Sisters, I am faint, the sap is drying in my veins; has no one saved a drop of water wherewith to refresh me?'

The sisters silently and sorrowfully shook their heads.

'Oh! how full of torment is our sojourn in the habitations of man!' whispered a monthly rose, whose pale cheeks had long since awakened the pity of a gentle blue passion-flower; 'my poor feet, which men call roots, are aching sorely; they have been pressed into this cold, hard pot, which crushes my slender toes on all sides.'

'We all share thy torments,' answered a tender-leaved creeper, from its place at the window; 'but I suffer more than thou. See how they have trained me against this hard, slippery wall, and fettered my tendrils with iron nails. Oh, every limb of my body is aching! I can no more move freely. I pine away, my arms always stretched out and bound, and every leaf to which I give being is born amid unspeakable torments.'

'Patience, patience!' whispered the passion-flower; 'look at me, I also bear my cross. Hard and dry is the plot of earth from which, with infinite pains, I draw my scanty nourishment, and they have turned

me away from the light, that favourite food of all flowers. See how I am compelled to twist and turn my hands, arms and face, to obtain a single faint ray! and when I at last behold the lovely source of light, when my longing lips feel the sun's glowing kiss, I am seized by a rough hand and carried to another spot, where I must again twine and creep, and all my sorrows begin anew!'

A sick heliotrope, placed in a dark corner and exposed to the full heat of the stove, raised itself convulsively at these words, and turning its weary head towards the light, which reached it only in broken rays through all the other flowers and leaves, it sighed,—

'Helios! Helios! thou whom I ever desire! Oh, how cruel are men, for they rob me of my life, they hide from me thy radiant countenance!'

'Have you not yet recovered from your ague, sister?' inquired a delicate mignonette of a lovely auricula, whose powdered head was bent to the ground; 'it was indeed too stormy and overwhelming, that shower bath from the hand of man, after such long drought.'

'I do not feel well,' answered the auricula; 'I have not strength to raise myself from the ground; but I am gradually growing accustomed to these things, and still live on. Ah! thus are we treated by men who think themselves so wise! might they not have known that such a dreadful deluge of cold water could not be beneficial after days of drought and glowing heat? Outside, in our home, the wide earth, we were often sprinkled by sudden showers; but those drops were sweet and warm, we shared them with millions of

brothers and sisters, and the sunbeams stretched forth their arms, gently raising us when we bent down.'

'Yes, it is pleasant out there,' said a bell-flower sadly; 'there I did not stand stiff and upright as I am compelled to stand here; my union with the stick to which they have bound me drives me even to despair. To be always in his company, to share all with him, sleep and watching, drought and wet, heat and cold, and never to hear a word, never to see a movement, oh, it kills me! How the winds once sported with my bells, making their sound heard afar, rejoicing all flowers, how we could dance and bend, sport with the breeze, and playfully avoid him when his kisses grew too violent! Oh, and my sweet love, the zephyr!'

'Dost thou speak of heat and cold, blue flower?' asked a pale, tall snowdrop; 'ah! it is these sudden changes of heat and cold which cause me the greatest, deepest misery. While we sleep silently and sweetly in our soft beds of earth, warmly covered with fine snow-flakes, and dreaming of the spring, whose loving eyes awake us in due season, pitiless men tear us from our warm mother earth, confine us in narrow cells, warm our soil with deceptive heat, awake us and drive us forth, and when we sleepily stagger towards the light, seeking the angel who calls us, all is strange, no breath of spring cools our hot cheeks, and if our cruel guardians chance to open a window, we shudder as we gaze disconsolately on the icy countenance of winter. We painfully drag on our weary existence until soon, oh, how gladly! we close our eyes in long, long slumber.'

While thus the flowers complained, a tall white

camellia was standing near the window. She could not understand the language of her companions, for she was a stranger, a forsaken banished child of the south, a flower Peri, seeking her lost Eden, a sorrowing queen, banished from her flourishing kingdom. She could not answer them, she only gazed upon them with her lovely eyes, but for these eyes alone she was beloved by all the flowers. She was lovely as the dream of a poet, and true beauty must win all hearts, especially in the kingdom of flowers, where envy is unknown.

Thick dust covered the firm, dark green leaves of the stranger blossom; she breathed slowly and with difficulty.

'Camellia suffers much,' whispered the flowers; 'she seems weary and sad; perhaps she is thinking of her native land, which is very beautiful, as a dying myrtle once told us.'

The camellia made no answer, in one language alone could she converse; she stood dreaming in silence and loneliness. Oh! the dreams of flowers are more beautiful, more glorious than human heart could suspect. She dreamed of far-off lands, of the palms and cypresses, of the lotus, the glowing sun, and the ever-blue sky; deep sorrow and earnest longing had drawn a dark furrow around her delicate white cheeks. The slender yellow bird in his showy cage suddenly raised his clear voice, and the intelligible sounds reached the ear of the silent one.

'Lovely stranger,' he sang, 'hear me! Born under the glowing, far distant vault of heaven, a prisoner, and fettered even as thou art, should not our sighs and tears, our hopes and longings, tend to one goal? I have heard each breath of sadness which escaped from thy

lips; I have seen each tear-drop which, unperceived by human eye, betrayed thy deep sorrow, and now our joys are one, now I love thee with a love as endless, as mighty as our troubles. Oh, were I with thee on that happy island, which the gentle, loving arms of the sea so tenderly encircled, while he breathed a soft wind, that the sun's wild kiss might not scorch the broad, tender leaves and beautiful flowers which grow where the tall palm rustles in the breeze, and the aged dragon-tree stretches his mighty boughs far over the blooming earth, holding nocturnal converse with the stars, the only remaining companions of his youth; where all is love and tender embraces, from the jagged rock, covered with cactus and luxuriant moss, to the highest branch of the trees where sweet magnolias are clinging. There, in those regions of light and love, are my parents and sisters, there my whole race lives and rejoices; this is the Eden I sing. And when my heart is oppressed by longing, when fear makes me forget the gilded bars, and I wildly flutter round my cage, men say, "See the merry bird!" Or my heart glows within me, and is torn by burning pains, as I think of my loved ones at home, and in trembling haste I plunge my feathers beneath the water which is brought to me in a glittering glass, seeking forgetfulness of my sorrows. And when the bright drops are scattered far around, and, shivering and disconsolate after my fruitless search, I flutter my wings to free them from the wet, they laugh and say, "See how he sports and plays, the rogue!"

'They strew dazzling sand within my cage, and its glittering rays gradually obscure the light of my eyes; muddy water and hard, coarse seeds are the food of one who lived on scented herbs and the fresh dews

of morning. I often spend days of torment longing for a fresh draught of water; they dance, they laugh, they sing, but no one heeds the plaintive cry of the bird. How seldom is a green leaf seen near my cage! with what joy I rush towards it! Green, green,—oh, this colour is like a sweet, gentle message from home! My sole comfort is my voice, the deeper my sorrows the louder my song; my note of agony is not sweet, but sharp and piercing, therefore do men impatiently throw a covering over my cage; then I am dumb, and conceal my anguish. When the dreadful monotony of the long, long day is past, night comes, our gentle friend, and carries us over land and sea to the lovely island where we were born, gathers all our loved ones around us, showers upon us the delights which once we enjoyed, and when, in the exuberance of our delight, we cry aloud, men gaze in surprise at one another and say, "Do birds dream, then?"

'And the end of all things is death. When longings and privations have exhausted our frail body, our eyes close, our wings and feet grow feeble. Our death-bed is not the cool cradle formed by some scented leaf, but the hard, sanded floor of our cage, or the warm, unquiet hand of some compassionate human. If we have lived without loving (and to do so is among birds reckoned the greatest of crimes), we cease to exist as we draw our last breath; but if a member of our race or a pure blossom has been passionately loved, and has returned our affection, then after death we live a new life in eternal union with our beloved, in full enjoyment of liberty, within that wonderful mysterious garden which men call "the lost Paradise." Love me, then, oh! love me, most beautiful of flowers!

Child of the light, give me immortality! See, I pine away, longing for thy gaze!'

Thus sang the bird, and the flower blushed gently as she listened, then trembled, spread forth her leaves, and whispered,—

'I will be thine, but be gentle with me, for I am ill! I cannot breathe, grey poison is lying thickly upon me, and I shall soon die if help comes not.'

The bird understood it all: his delicate beak pushed apart the bars of his prison, love gave him gigantic strength, and with bleeding wings he struggled through the bars and fluttered towards the beautiful camellia. Then the flower smiled for the first time, and a strange, sweet perfume was breathed by her blossoms; the bird, almost beside himself with joy, brushed away with his wings the dust which covered the leaves of the camellia, who now breathed freely, as if relieved from an oppressive weight.

The door was softly opened, and a young girl, the owner of the bird and of the flowers, entered the room. Sleep seemed yet to hang on her dark eyelashes, weariness, the result of her triumphs, lay upon her youthful forehead, the night of dissipation had blanched her cheeks.

'What a close sultry air!' she exclaimed, fretfully, and was moving forward to open the window, when she perceived her yellow favourite, and hastily endeavoured to catch him. But the bird, rendered almost unconscious by the sweet kiss of his beloved, was as if dazzled, fluttered round the room, and struck his head against the hard, deceptive glass of the windows. As the last melodious sigh of the bird echoed through the room, and the maiden's dark blue eyes overflowed with

bitter tears, something was heard to fall softly;—dead upon the ground lay the silent white stranger-blossom.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN.

'Noch Keinen sah ich fröhlich enden,
Auf den mit immer vollen Händen
Die Götter ihre Gaben streuen.'

In this world, so full of joys and sorrows, may be found beings of human form who, like ourselves, are called men, but on whose heads the invisible hands of the Deity have showered in profusion the rarest and most glorious gifts, on whom, therefore, the earth has nothing more to bestow, except the ground on which they tread. In the proud consciousness of their immeasurable wealth, these favourites of the gods will often forget both the world and its inhabitants; their triumphant gaze heeds not the spring and winter of our joys and sorrows, cares not for the blossoms and thorns of our mortal life, but seems fixed on the eternal sea of light whence their glory is derived. Oh! turn sometimes to earth your glittering eyes, ye glorious ones, despise not the little world which bears you, rejoice and weep with the men who gaze upon you with many a sigh of longing for your crown. Take heed! beware! every word which falls from your lips is gathered up by your mighty foes, and the jealous mother of all living things takes signal vengeance upon her presumptuous children. The ground holds them fast, the glittering forms, the demons of the

depths and of the darkness, those old, inveterate foes of fortunate men, look with envious eyes upon the chosen ones, wound their careless feet with the never-healing stings of serpents, lay snares and set dark nets for the smiling children of the light, and rest not day or night. There is but one talisman against those dark and terrible powers, but one defence and shield against the might of hell—the flower of humility.

One beautiful summer evening three women and a young vigorous man were sitting in a large, shady garden of the pleasant town of Bonn. Their hearts were filled with joy and thankfulness as they silently observed the scene, for the earth was celebrating her nightly feast of peace and rest, the moon was bending over his beloved, and as his gaze fell upon her, his gentle countenance was radiant with love and delight. The flowers whispered to the stars, and the zephyr kissed the leaves of the trees until they trembled with pleasure. The sounds and songs grew fainter and fainter, only the murmuring of the mighty, silvery Rhine was heard from afar, and the holy music of a peal of bells quivered through the evening air. At length the prayerful silence was broken by a soft, melodious voice,—

'Grandmother; mother; Ludwig,' murmured a lovely girl, 'how beautiful, how lovely is our earth! how rich and happy are we all, if we are good! Do not our warmest wishes slumber on such an evening as this?'

The mother, whose gentle countenance was turned towards the speaker, answered by a glance of deep affection, but the youth gently laid his powerful, well-formed hand upon his sister's fair hair, saying,—

'How great is the difference between us, lovely dreamer! Thy childlike wishes are silent in the sweet calm of evening, but my strong, wild desires awake, and lift up their voices more loudly than in the bright and busy day!'

'But what more coulds't thou desire, thou restless one?' whispered the girl, as she gazed with a mixture of tenderness and anxiety into her brother's strangely animated countenance.

'Think, my love,' he answered, 'what is most beautiful upon earth? what is the highest blessing given to mortal men? what is God's most glorious gift to a struggling, wearied soul?'

'The most beautiful, most glorious gift?' thoughtfully repeated the lovely girl. 'Ah, grandmother, we must first ask you, to whom the world and its inhabitants have been familiar during the long years of your life. Speak, dearest, and help me!'

And she turned from her brother to an aged woman who sat in the deep shadow of a blooming lime-tree. Her features showed signs of age, yet bore the impress of that perpetual spring which reigned in her heart.

'Light, my loved ones, must be the most beautiful, most glorious gift!' was the answer. But grandmother was blind; it was long since she had seen the beautiful spring, or the faithful, sparkling eyes of those she loved, the bright daylight, or the silvery moon; and now, in her darkness, she might well think of the eternal heaven, whose glorious radiance drew nearer each day to her weary heart.

'Light?' cried Ludwig, doubtfully, and a strange gleam shone in his dark eyes. 'Oh, no! light can never be the highest gift to man! light is but a warm

comfort, a joy, a pleasure to the weary; light is not the highest blessing, it is not life!'

The sister hastily seized his outstretched hand.

'Ludwig, *sound* is the glorious gift!' she whispered, joyfully, as she thought of her father's beautiful songs, of her brother's wondrous melodies as he sat before the piano at home, of her favourites, the joyful birds, of that glorious nightingale, the spring visitor to the dark lime-tree, and of all the beloved human voices which fell so sweetly on her youthful heart.

'Child,' answered her brother, caressingly, 'it is true that the soul may feel entrancing happiness when it is buried, borne along, or hidden by the sound-waves of some mighty stream of harmony; sound is more than light, it is the embodiment of light, but it cannot be the highest blessing! Mother, mother! can you not tell?' he cried, still more vehemently, as he fell on his knees before her. In that moment of inspiration and expectation his countenance, his strange irregular features grew bright, the spirit of his great vocation, as yet not understood by his loved ones, seemed to hover around his head, and a glorious halo rested upon his youthful brow, so brightly shone the moonbeams upon his rich dark hair.

'My child!' said the mother gently, as she pressed her son to her heart, the highest gift is *love*, for the poet has said,—

'"Es überwiegt das Leben Alles,
Wenn die Liebe in der Schale liegt."'

The youth let fall his arms, tore himself from his mother's embrace, and whispered sorrowfully,—

'Do *you*, then, not know, dear mother? Love, do you say? Ah, love is but a dream, and I will not dream, mother, —no, I will labour, I will live. Therefore listen and believe me. The highest, most glorious gift of God is *power*, creating, never-failing power, and I know that its germs are within me, I feel their growth. Oh, God, leave me this wondrous might! do but grant it me, and then take away all that men hold highest and dearest, all that they love and long for! Light—sound—love—I desire them not! For that one gift I would without a sigh sacrifice all earthly harmonies, the light of sun and stars, and a thousand dreams of love. Deprive me of all the joys of earth, of all riches; but give me that undying, creating power, and while I live will I praise Thee! Then will I form for myself a world,—yet not one world, no, a thousand and yet a thousand will arise at my command. What is this poor little earth to me, in my inestimable happiness, in my immeasureable wealth? I shall listen to harmonies, but not with my earthly sense, I shall see light, but not with my bodily eyes. And love? Ah! he who is beloved by the gods will never desire the heart of a weak child of man!'

He stood erect before them, a picture of the noblest, but most untamed pride, a mighty suppliant, a beseeching ruler; who could withstand him? But deep fear rushed like a cold stream through the hearts of the loving women, his sister's cheek grew pale, and the mother's eyes filled with tears. A cloud passed over the moon, while a strong night-wind suddenly arose, the flowers drew their tender leaves closer together, whisperings and shudderings seemed to fly through all nature, startling the peaceful earth like an evil dream. Dark shadows spread and moved, the horrible scream of an

owl sounded like derisive laughter, the birds awoke and timidly fluttered here and there.

'Daring beloved child, may you never have cause to think with sorrow upon this evening!' said the grandmother, softly, as she rose from her seat. Silently, and with many a deep sigh, her daughter and her granddaughter led her to the house. The youth alone spent half the night dreaming beneath the dark lime-tree, feasting his mind upon blissful thoughts and prophetic visions, while blossoms from the lime-tree, heavy with dew, fell upon him like perfumed tear-drops.

Only a few months later, in the year 1792, Ludwig van Beethoven left his beloved home, and, full of hope and expectation, entered the then splendid imperial city of Vienna. God's glorious gift, mighty creating power, remained with him (we all know it), as it remained with no other mortal, in unfading brilliancy until the last hours of his life. Waves of sound arose at his bidding, and he carelessly let them pass through his fingers, caring not if men knelt before them in admiring devotion, or wept and laughed in ecstasy. His symphonies, his masses, his 'Fidelio,' his overtures, his sonatas, his delicate mosaics, formed of the most precious jewels, his costly pearls of song—these are the ever-living memorials of his creating power. But the little earth which he had despised closed against him one by one her flower-decked gates; his solitude was majestic as the great favourite of the gods himself. A dark demon grinned maliciously as with cold hand he touched the ear of the great one; from thenceforth no sound from the outer world could penetrate to that proud yet gentle soul. No magic blossom of love fell

upon his path, and at length even the beautiful light faded from his gaze, impenetrable night and stillness as of the grave surrounded his yet unbowed form. All his loved ones had long since departed to their eternal home, and the hands of strangers led the man so kingly in his age and sorrows, the hands of strangers prepared for him his last resting-place. All the piercing sorrows which his earthly existence had heaped upon him, with herculean strength he forced them back into his mighty breast, all his wounds were hidden from human sight; the proud one never uttered a sound of complaint, but he was never seen to smile. But those who know him, admire him, love, him may hear the cry of despair which often echoes throughout his gigantic creations, filling our souls with emotion; —it is the longing of that mighty spirit for the once despised love, the longing of a solitary watcher for the blissful dream which is dreamed by millions around him. And the dark shadows which here and there pass over the dazzling brilliancy of his creating spirit, they are the sighs of the fettered, forsaken Prometheus for the light, for the sound of the earth which bore him, which once in proud presumption he had cast away.

Cruelly, pitilessly did the revengeful earth hold him fast, until, on the evening of the 26th March, 1827, the eternal spring came, hand in hand with his earthly brother, to the proud, solitary hero. The heavy chains which bound his glorious wings were loosened, the prison in which his soul had been so long confined fell into ruins. 'Mother, mother, now I will slumber and dream, I am weary of watching and labour!' cried the dying lips.

But there, in the heaven above, that great redeemed soul is surrounded by eternal light, eternal harmony, never-ending love.

THE MEISTER'S GRAVE.

A CHARMING swallow had built her nest close under the roof of a melancholy grey house, situate in a great city. She was a dear little creature, and would often play for hours together with her pretty children. She flew about with her bright-eyed companions, joyfully chirped her morning and evening song, and, living in her pleasant nest, she envied not the king of birds, the eagle, in his lofty fortress. As the swallow flew joyfully through the air, crying, 'Good-night,' and the moon smiled upon her, a little window was opened, and a pleasant face with beautiful but mournful eyes, appeared, these eyes followed long the joyous, rapid flight of the bird. Ah! the song of the swallow is so fresh, so full of life, that we would advise all afflicted ones to listen to its artless, happy chirpings, which seem to make men's hearts grow lighter. The silent observer of our swallow may have thought the same, for when at length he left the window, the glance of his eye was no longer sorrowful, and sometimes even a faint smile would play upon his countenance. When his form had disappeared from the window, full, beautiful harmonies would sound from the little room, streaming out into the peaceful, silent night. But the tones were not cheerful, even the thoughtless swallow felt this, and could not rest as she listened to the

chords so full of earnest desires and deep sorrow; and when at last her little wings grew weary, when she returned to her tiny home, slipping cautiously in, that she might not disturb her children's slumbers, she would stretch forth her little head again and again, fixing her eyes upon the window behind which she could still distinguish a faint gleam of light. Then the harmonies grew mightier and more heart-stirring; but the little swallow never knew when they ceased; and when at length the day dawned, it seemed as though the last tones had scarcely died away. During the whole day the window was covered by a green curtain, and deep silence reigned within; the bird often flew quite near the casement, but not a sound was to be heard. She much wished to obtain from a beautiful passion-flower, which at night was visible behind the window, information respecting him she imagined to be a great magician; but the flower's great blue eyes were always turned towards the interior of the room where dwelt her beloved master, seldom did she cast a hasty glance upon the world around. Besides, the passion-flower is among birds considered to be proud and very pious, reasons enough to arouse in the bosom of the swallow a feeling of aversion towards the mysterious blossom, for our swallow was a free thinker.

The summer passed like a dream; the birds of passage prepared themselves for their long flight to the happy, warm, sunny lands, and bade farewell to their summer home. The young swallows flew round the house, listening to the dear, well-known sounds which had floated around their cradle. Rough winds shook the leaves from the trees, the last flower sank down

and died. The little window stood wide open, notwithstanding the cool evening air, the tones streamed forth in their majestic beauty, the unknown musician sat before the piano, his head bent down, his fingers moving softly, almost unconsciously, over the keys. Large and small sheets of music-paper, covered with notes, lay scattered around. The little swallow, her heart torn by the thought of the farewell she was so soon to take, attracted and bewildered by the wonderful sounds, forgot all her fear. She flew into the room, fluttered round the musicians head, touched with her wings his noble brow, and at last, confused by his gentle glance of thanks, she fell upon his weary, sorrowful heart. Dreamily she felt herself raised by soft hands, felt warm breath, and a gentle kiss upon her head, when, a fresh breeze blowing in at the window, the swallow awoke from her pleasant stupor, and with one cry of farewell soared high, high into the air, followed by a deep-drawn sigh from the heart of a suffering mortal. During the whole journey she talked, with her children and with her life-companion, of him who had held her in his hands and kissed her dreaming night and day of the heavenly sounds which he had called into being.

With the lovely spring the swallows returned, and with joyful cries sought their old nests; and, one beautiful May morning, our little swallow also sought her home. The well-known narrow window was no longer obscured by the green curtain. The room was empty, and the passion-flower stood pale and drooping in the glare of the sun, who seemed much pleased with his view of the earth in her charming, fresh array, for he departed as slowly as possible, and with

evident reluctance; the swallow, on the contrary, had scarcely patience to wait for the evening. At last it came, spreading its dark veil over the earth; the restless bird flew hither and thither, listening anxiously. In vain! no melodious sounds were borne on the evening breeze, and the window remained closed.

The next morning the swallow flew to the passion-flower, who lay exhausted and dying. The bird waved her wings, gently fanning the weary one; they then spoke softly with each other, until at last the lovely blossom bowed its head and fell asleep. The swallow gently severed it from the withered stalk, and flew with it far, far away to the silent, lonely graveyard. There a mound, covered with fresh green turf, glittered in the sunlight. The swallow laid the flower at the feet of its gentle guardian, who was slumbering deep below, and sadly, wearily, returned to her home.

In the cool of the evening she flew to a lonely wood which lay near at hand, and sought her friend the blackbird, a well-known singer. Blackbird was not alone, she was sitting on a handsome fir-tree, and a goldfinch had saucily taken up his station by her side. The goldfinch in his gaudy coat is as irresistible to the ladies of the bird tribe as an officer to a fair maiden, but the swallow had no eyes for him, her little head was full of serious, important thoughts. After a hasty greeting, she said beseechingly to the blackbird, who turned her great head on one side as coquettishly as possible,—

'My dear, you must do me a favour!'

'What is it?' replied the blackbird, rather carelessly, for she was not too well pleased by the interruption.

'I am going to arrange an evening concert,' answered the other, mysteriously, 'and I want you to sing for me.'

'Oh, with pleasure!' answered the blackbird, not a little flattered, and she tried a shake, on hearing which the goldfinch almost broke his neck with delight. 'I suppose King Eagle has arrived, then?' she continued, 'or is it the handsome Prince Falcon, with his *aide-de-camp*, Count Sparrowhawk?'

'No, no, none of these!' interrupted the swallow. 'I wish to give a serenade over the last resting-place of a dear glorious musician, and I do not think my voice good enough, although I know he liked to listen to my chirpings while he yet lived. You must help me with your voice, dear blackbird.'

The songstress almost fainted with astonishment.

'What an idea!' she exclaimed, angrily. 'Am I to expose my voice to the damp, hurtful night-winds for the sake of a dead musician? No, dear friend, you cannot be in earnest! you could not require such a sacrifice from me, the celebrated singer of the woods! Besides, I must prepare for to-morrow; I am to sing at the *matinée* of a raven virtuoso, who performs on the beak harmonica. In the afternoon a highly interesting exiled canary is to give a concert, and in the evening there is a musical entertainment at the house of Mrs. Jay.'

The deeply mortified swallow hastened away before the blackbird had finished her speech. She soon met the pretty but capricious redbreast, and eagerly repeated the petition which had before been so unsuccessful. The redbreast was not at all disinclined to confer a favour, but had many occupations and en-

gagements; even now she was waiting for her admirer, a gay siskin, she had laid out all kinds of delicious seeds upon fresh rose leaves, and filled with dew cups formed of the blue bell-flower. The swallow waited some time—no siskin appeared. Suddenly the red-breast became extremely hoarse, she feigned severe illness, slipped into her nest, and closed her eyes. The swallow mournfully spread her wings and flew through the wood in the direction of her home.

On the way she saw the faithless siskin perched upon a handsome birch-tree, and singing, as if for a wager, with a charming hedgesparrow who sat beside him. The swallow nodded to them, and was passing on, when her happy, careless friend, stopped her, exclaiming,—

'What is the matter with you, my dear? You look quite melancholy, and a swallow with a sorrowful countenance is indeed something remarkable. Tell me what ails you?'

And the swallow told her story.

'We will sing with you,' said the siskin, at last, quite gravely; 'we will all sing, I promise you.'

'And I promise, too, in the name of all my sisters,' cried the pretty hedgesparrow.

The swallow's eyes glistened.

'Oh! what a splendid chorus I shall have for my dear Meister Franz!' she cried, joyfully.

'Meister Franz! was it of him you were speaking?' screamed the siskin, as with outstretched wings he fell upon the swallow's neck. 'Oh, we all know him! It was he who so lovingly tended my sick brother when a wicked boy had broken the poor fellow's leg, it was he who released all birds from the snares and

nets of deceitful men, with the last penny he possessed he redeemed my first love from the hands of a bird-fancier, and then set her at liberty. Yes, all birds and flowers knew him well, the dear Meister! how often did he walk through these woods, humming strange melodies! For him, for him will we sing every night.'

'At midnight, then, in the graveyard,' whispered the swallow, joyfully, and flew onward.

In the last tree of the forest a merry party were sitting. Cousin Bullfinch kept a school there, and numbers of pretty little birds were assembled round him. He was sitting in their midst, and looked very venerable in his black cap and red waistcoat. He gazed at his pupils with his bright, friendly eyes, and told the wild young folks all kinds of comical stories. The swallow told him of her plans; Cousin Bullfinch promised his assistance, and gave her a few words of introduction to his best friend, Mr. Woodpecker, who was a music-director and resided only a few trees off. The young birds also wished to sing for good Meister Franz; they all knew him, some from their parents' stories, others by the accounts they had heard from their elder brothers and sisters. The swallow bade them a cheerful farewell. We will not betray what passed during her interview with Music-director Woodpecker; but they must have had a pleasant conversation, for the swallow was radiant with joy when, late at night, she returned to her nest. She greeted her children, and after a brief repose flew to the silent graveyard, where the lovely moon shed rays of dazzling brightness over the Meister's grave. At midnight voices were heard from among the branches of all the

trees, far and near, and a full chorus of birds sang the praises of the departed Meister, that earnest musician, that stranger upon earth, who was better known, understood, and honoured by birds and flowers than by men—the praise of the weary, solitary wanderer Franz Schubert. The faithful swallow flew round the hillock, kissing the blades of grass, while upon the rose-bush which waved over the mound sat a nightingale, sending forth streams of entrancing melody; she was the favourite pupil of the honest woodpecker, who now sat at the feet of the dead Meister, beating time with praiseworthy energy. The birds sang so charmingly that the moon and the stars listened to their melody; all flowers awoke, all insects drew near and the glow-worms formed a glittering circle round the peaceful grave.

Could their clear, joyful songs be heard amidst the dreams of him who lay slumbering beneath? The birds think so, and every year, in the first days of the lovely May, they sing a midnight serenade over the grave of their dear Meister Franz; every year in the last days of autumn, when the happy swallows are preparing for their long journey, the lovely songsters come to bid him farewell.

Thus his grave is never forsaken; the little bright eyes of birds and flowers watch over that quiet, peaceful tomb.

THE INVENTION OF THE HARMONICA.

A BRIGHT fire was burning in a charming little third-floor room of an insignificant London house. It was a dreary November afternoon; but the cheerful blaze seemed to mock at surly winter, who, as he threw handfuls of snow and ice against the window, howled and roared like a captive bear. The evening was beginning to shroud London in its dark veil, only the dome of St. Paul's and the gigantic mass of the Tower buildings resisted its influence and towered above the surrounding fog. The street lamps had been lit, and were struggling against the yet remaining day-light, but the little corner room was in darkness, save for the firelight, which danced up and down the walls, cast shadows on the floor, and played upon the ceiling, lighting up by turns the features of the four persons who were there assembled.

The most important personage in the little group was a man who sat in a low arm-chair near the fire, his head leaning against the back of his seat. He was dressed in black clothes, and, contrary to the custom of the times, wore no wig, his thick gray hair was brushed closely back from his face. But what a forehead was that, what well-formed temples! No human countenance could boast of a nobler forehead, for the dreams of a mighty soul were traced there, and two clear, intelligent eyes stood near as interpreters of the visions. Who could have paused to inquire if the features were handsome, if youth had passed away from cheeks and lips, if the mouth which could smile so sweetly was regularly formed? His

figure was in no way remarkable, but every movement was graceful and sure. And his name? Benjamin Franklin, the celebrated American philanthropist, the well-known philosopher. The interests of science had now, in the year 1762, brought him from Philadelphia to London, where he intended to remain for the space of some months. His first visit was to the house of a much-esteemed relative, Mrs. Davies, who since her husband's death had lived with Mary and Cecilia, her two talented daughters, a life of retirement within the great city. Franklin scarcely remembered the two girls, whom he had last seen when they were quite young children, and was not a little surprised on receiving a warm greeting from two charming girls, aged respectively eighteen and nineteen years. Cecilia threw her arms about his neck, while her elder sister, Mary, simply offered her hand, blushing and trembling as she did so.

The girls could scarcely believe that they saw before them the great man of whose fame they had spoken and heard so much. Scarcely a day had passed in which his praises had not been sounded by his English relatives, and his world-wide fame was as sunshine to the hearts of the little family. The great powers of that mind, the nobleness of that soul were nowhere better known and appreciated than on the third floor of that insignificant London house. Every event of Franklin's life was discussed by Mrs. Davies and her daughters, all his actions seemed to them irreproachable. The history of his first love, the beautiful Miss Nells, his separation from and subsequent reconciliation with her (she having in the meantime become the wife of another), had an indescribable

charm for the young people. Mary could not understand how a girl who had once been beloved by such a man could bestow her heart upon another, while Cecilia aptly remarked that Franklin was not the *celebrated* Franklin at the time when he paid his addresses to the charming Miss Nells.

'Ah, if I had only been Miss Nells!' sighed Mary; whereupon her sister, with some irritation, replied,—

'How can you wish to be old and ugly now, and not to be able to sing?'

'Oh, if Franklin loved me I could sacrifice all, even my voice!'

'Children, do not talk such wicked nonsense!' interrupted Mrs. Davies, at last. 'Our respected relative is old, and a married man, and when you have seen him neither of you will dream of falling in love with him.'

Among all the strange varieties of woman's affection, which no philosopher has yet endeavoured to classify, there is one which always charms and captivates, although it is more frequently seen than the world-defying blossom of earnest, heart-felt passion—it is that secret, inspired tenderness which silently follows the steps of our greatest men. At the foot of tall palms, mighty oaks, and proud plantains this modest flower unfolds its leaves, desiring nothing more than the spot of ground it occupies. It feeds upon the sunbeams which fall upon the summit of the tree, gradually the tender roots of its life mingle with the roots of its protector, and although he suspects it not, feel and suffer with him, dying when he dies. But none of those who stand sorrowing beside the fallen oak grieve for the violet which he has crushed in his fall. It would not be difficult to point to such lovely flowers

in the life of every great man;—Mary was one of the loveliest among them.

The intelligence that Benjamin Franklin was at last really coming to England, to spend a few months in London, naturally gave rise to much joyful excitement in Mrs. Davies' household. 'We must sing to him! we must sing to him a great deal!' cried Cecilia, 'so that he may know there is something to admire in us.' And she was right, the lovely child, for her singing and that of her sister might well be thought worthy of admiration. The sisters had already attracted much attention in London, musical talent was in them united to rare beauty and child-like modesty and reserve. The name of the sisters Davies was sufficient to fill any concert-room.

And now the time had come, the long and eagerly-expected Franklin was with them, and sat almost every evening in the little corner room which we have described. Mrs. Davies, a tall pleasant-looking woman, wandered rather restlessly about the room, moving a chair, pulling straight a table cover, altering the position of a flower vase, now stepping to the window, now to the fireplace, and whispering to herself, 'It is almost dark!' She was an extremely active woman, and could not understand the delights of dreaming away the twilight, neither had she ever allowed her daughters so dangerous a gratification. Since the arrival of their relative, however, she had been obliged to submit patiently, for Franklin was especially fond of the twilight hours. The girls were sitting near the window, Cecilia on a stool at her sister's feet, her pretty arms resting on Mary's knees. Her rosy face was turned upwards, and heavy black curls fell over

her handsome shoulders. She chattered and laughed as only young girls can, but Mary scarcely heeded her sister's lively talk, her eyes were fixed on Franklin's noble forehead. Mary was a true daughter of Old England, she had deep blue eyes and a dazzling complexion, an indescribable charm lay in her gentle movements, in her slender form, in the slight inclination of her head to the left side; but a more searching gaze would easily discover in the reluctant raising of the black eyelashes, and the slightly wrinkled corners of the beautiful mouth, touching, unaffected mournfulness, the mysterious token of a sensitive mind, the wound of a too tender heart.

'You must sing to me this evening, dear girls,' said Franklin; 'but let it be now, in the twilight, for in such hours music is still sweeter, mightier in its effects than at other times.'

The sisters rose. Mary opened the instrument, which stood near the window, and Cecilia pushed a chair towards her. The slender fingers of the elder sister glided rapidly over the black, rattling keys, which sounded strangely melodious when Mary played; she now accompanied her sister's song. Cecilia's voice was remarkably rich and flexible, the most splendid, powerful soprano; she sang with perfect expression one of Handel's arias. If voices may be compared to colours, Cecilia's voice resembled the beautiful, deep blue of a summer sky, the room seemed too small for the tones which streamed from the lips of the youthful singer, and when she ceased, Franklin smilingly remarked to Mrs. Davies,—

'Well, Fanny, is it still dark? all around seems bathed in light.'

Cecilia now coaxingly entreated her sister,—

'Mary, sing us one of your old ballads, not an aria, but your "little Scottish songs," which no one in the world can sing as you sing them.'

And Mary cast one glance towards Franklin, shook back her flowing curls, struck a mournful chord, and then sang a deeply sorrowful melody, an old English ballad,—

'Then fare thee well, my dear, dear love!'

Franklin involuntarily folded his hands, and bent forward, listening intently, the maiden's voice penetrated to his inmost soul. The tones carried him back to the time of his childhood, his mother's voice fell upon his ear, and sweet pictures of years long past became once more visible. But as the music still swept on, a thrill of agony passed through his heart, a longing unutterably painful in its intensity,—the longing for his departed youth. In that moment he would have sacrificed all; fame, glory, his whole life, for the vigorous form of a youth of twenty summers. For then why should he have concealed from the young fair-haired maiden those burning tears which coursed down his cheeks and of which he was now ashamed? Mary's voice, though in itself not powerful, had a wonderful influence on the heart of a listener, those tones had an indescribable charm, vibrating and trembling like the rays of the moon upon the calm waters of a lake. Franklin battled with the deepest emotion he had ever felt, for, in spite of his bodily strength, his nature was extremely sensitive. When Mary had finished the last verse of the simple, plaintive melody, he rose and seemed as if about to ap-

proach her, but threw out his arms wildly and sank fainting to the ground, his forehead struck against the iron fire-guard, and a few drops of blood ran down his left temple.

This unexpected accident threw the little family into the deepest consternation. Cecilia called for lights, Mrs. Davies endeavoured to raise the prostrate form of her relative, Mary alone stood motionless as a statue until the servant entered with candles, and Mrs. Davies' voice said, 'Hannah, help me here, and then run for Dr. Snobbers!' Then Mary cast a look of despair upon Franklin, and noiselessly glided from the room. Her absence was not observed, for all were occupied with the still unconscious Franklin. She ran down the stairs, opened the house door, and stood in the snow-covered street. The icy north wind which caught her glowing cheeks and tangled her curls made her shudder for an instant, but then she hurried onwards, pursued by the thought, 'He is dying, and I have sung him to death!' Oh how, in that moment of agony, did she hate her voice! Like a shadow she glided past the houses; the dwelling of the doctor and family friend lay but two streets off. She now heard noisy shouts proceeding from a dark alley, but she heeded them not. A troop of merry young men approached, the rays of a lantern revealed the pale countenance of the lovely girl, and Mary despairingly endeavoured to conceal herself in the deep shadows of the houses. In vain, she was soon surrounded, and terrified by a variety of thoughtless speeches. She summoned all her courage to say, in a firm tone of voice, 'For God's sake let me pass, I am seeking aid for a dying man. Dr. Snobber's

house is twenty yards off!' Her heart beat almost audibly as she spoke, and even those wild, thoughtless men were struck by the terror expressed in her eyes, the deathly pallor of her features, and the tone of her voice. They involuntarily drew back, while the hunted deer escaped, reached the doctor's house, rushed into his study, and fell at his feet with the cry, 'Franklin is dying!'

Benjamin Franklin had long since recovered from what he called his 'little nervous attack;' but the dark angel of death still stood at Mary's bedside; her severe and prolonged illness was the result of that evening expedition and the intense excitement with which it was connected. When at last, to the great joy of her family, she was able to leave her bed, and took the first steps supported by Franklin's arm, when she observed his thoughtful care and tenderness, she secretly blessed that anxious evening which had brought her a joy unknown before, the joy of being cared for by Franklin. Poor Mary! she was then far from suspecting what a few weeks later caused her unspeakable sorrow, a grief which almost threatened destruction both to mind and body—she had lost her voice. Dr. Snobbers was the only person who did not seem astonished at the consequences of that imprudent evening walk. 'This so-called misfortune is scarcely worth mentioning,' he said, 'Mary's life itself was at stake!' He would not understand why the women wept so bitterly, refusing to be comforted, for mother and sister mourned the loss of her voice almost as deeply as Mary herself. Ah! he who has never received that heavenly gift of song can never know

the source of purest pleasure, of sweetest comfort which it reveals to its possessors. He who can sing renders more entrancing the joys which falls to his lot, and finds a cradle-song for the most bitter sorrow; a thousand delightful secrets are carried by the voice of song; in its tones the heart of the singer trembles, weeps, rejoices, and none can complain of or rebel against its influence. When Mary Davies, after many endeavours to regain her treasure, was at last compelled to believe it lost for ever, she did not sink into dark despair; but she faded as slowly and surely as a flower when deprived of sunlight. Her beautiful piano-playing was no longer a pleasure to her. 'It only makes me feel my loss more deeply,' she said, and only played when she accompanied her sister. At first the tears would run down her cheeks as she listened to Cecilia's songs, but soon she appeared more composed, and was evidently endeavouring to assume, in the presence of her honoured friend, a resignation which in spite of all earnest endeavours she was yet far from feeling.

Franklin, however, was not deceived, his return to Philadelphia was delayed from month to month, and every evening found him at the Davies' house. He was always absent-minded and apparently engrossed in thought, for he would stare straight before him, and scarcely answer the remarks addressed to him by Mrs. Davies or Cecilia; he would hear no music, and the little piano remained closed during his visits. If Mary spoke to him in her gentle, feeble voice, he would start from his reverie and answer kindly; at her slightest movement he would glance towards her, however absorbed he might appear. His eyes con-

stantly followed her, no sigh, no secret tear, no shadow of pain which passed over her forehead could escape him, yet he never alluded to Mary's loss.

Thus week after week passed on, the summer was departing, the first leaves were falling from the trees, when, one evening, Benjamin Franklin entered the little corner room at a later hour than was his custom. The mother and the sisters sat round the little table; Mrs. Davies was working, Cecilia reading, and Mary dreaming. As he approached she gazed upon him in surprise, she had never seen such an expression in his countenance; deep, unutterable joy streamed from his eyes, filling her heart with a warm glow of pleasure. He drew near and took her hand.

'Dear, dear Mary,' he said, gently and tenderly, 'for my sake you lost your sweet voice, a voice which I can never, never forget; to-day I offer you a substitute, and you shall sing, though not with your lips. Remain here while I retire to the next room, and listen attentively to the sounds which you will hear.'

The women drew nearer together in almost trembling expectation; the door between the two rooms remained partly open. A brief silence—and the ears and hearts of the listeners were filled with the sweetest music, its tones so soft, so melting, that neither the harp, flute, nor any other instrument known to the women could have produced them. They were sounds which seemed to come from another world, the voice of a glorified human being, the song of an angel. It was impossible to listen without weeping; it seemed to draw their hearts above, causing the listeners to feel at once both joy and sorrow. And

as the wondrous music grew louder, all recognised the mournful melody of the old English ballad, the last which Mary had sung,—

'Then fare thee well, my dear, dear love!'

They seemed to hear Mary's voice, that dear thrilling voice which had died long before. The listeners sobbed aloud; but Mary, with one cry of mingled grief and delight, tore herself from Cecilia's arms and rushed into the room whence the sounds proceeded.

Franklin sat before a strange-looking instrument; a pedestal supporting a cylinder, to which were attached glass hemispheres gradually diminishing in size, and so fitting into one another that the edges of one hemisphere passed beyond those of its neighbour. Franklin had placed his fingers upon the edges of the glasses, set the cylinder in motion by a movement of his foot, and so produced the heart-stirring sounds.

'Mary, that was your voice!' he cried to the astonished and agitated girl. Now come, let me teach you to sing, and when you sing here my voice will sing with you; I have found this voice for you.'

It was the lovely Mary Davies who, a little later, astonished the world by the aid of Franklin's celebrated invention which he called the harmonica. By unwearied labour she soon attained extraordinary execution on that remarkable instrument. When she had parted from her beloved friend, and Franklin had returned to America, she travelled to France and thence to Germany, stopping at the principal towns

and publicly performing on the harmonica. No one could play the instrument as she played it, her very soul seemed to rojoice and sing as her fingers touched the glasses. In these moments her countenance was so remarkable in its loveliness, so animated, so radiant with mysterious joy, that those who saw her seemed filled by the same spirit. Many could not listen to the sounds, fainted, wept or were seized with convulsions, and yet the mournful concerts given by the lovely English girl were crowded as if they had been the most gorgeous entertainments.

When Mrs. Davies was dead, and Cecilia a celebrated singer in Italy, Mary returned to London, and now discovered that her second voice had undermined her health far more than the first could have done. She withdrew from society, and lived in the strictest retirement, scarcely receiving her most intimate friends. Alone, separated from all that was dear to her, Mary saw the days dawn and pass away, hoping nothing, yet sorrowing not. She never complained, she was even cheerful, for could she not sing? Did not *his* voice sing with her? And the voice which she had received from him remained sweet and clear when Mary's hair was streaked with grey, and the hard hand of time had destroyed the beauty of her features. Where did she send those glorious sounds which every evening she drew from her beloved harmonica? No one knew.

The doctors wondered how that frail life could still endure, they could not understand what sustained it, for many years they had predicted Mary's speedy death. Something, they knew not what, had power to keep the soul within the feeble body.

On the 27th April, 1790, Mary was carried to her harmonica for the last time. She smiled joyfully as her fingers touched the glasses, and the well remembered melody,—

'Then fare thee well, my dear, dear love!'

was drawn forth by her still beautiful hands. Suddenly she started, listened, leaned back, and ceased to breathe—the frail thread of her life was broken.

In that same hour, far from her quiet chamber, far away over the wide ocean, the angel of death bore away to the regions of eternal happiness the mighty soul of Benjamin Franklin.

THE CAT'S FUGUE.

PICTURE to yourselves a little house, almost hidden among dark green myrtle bushes, covered with creeping vines, surrounded and shaded by wild roses and orange-trees. In the background may be seen Naples, the queen of cities, and over all stretches the ever-smiling Italian sky. A bright scene such as this is indeed delightful to eyes half blinded by winter snows and ice, and our longing hearts dream of all this loveliness until we talk of the brilliant deep blue sky, as if we had ourselves felt the sun's glowing kiss and gazed upon the glories of the south.

When you have gazed a short time on this little picture, you may turn your eyes upon an aged, carelessly attired man, who sits at the door of the house, thought-

fully gazing upon the distant scene. An orange tree drops, from time to time, its scented blossoms upon him—he heeds them not, roses kiss his head, and butterflies flutter around him, but he takes no part in the cheerful, busy life; and yet his dark, nobly-formed features bore an expression of almost passionate animation, his fiery Italian eyes forming a strange contrast to his snowy hair. His name was Allessandro Scarlatti. A harp rested against his chair, and a large black cat had, with solemn mien and inimitable dignity, taken up his station before it. He was engaged in gently passing the tip of his tail, which, like his left ear, was of dazzling whiteness, across the strings of the instrument, which curious experiment naturally produced a variety of strange sounds. Scarlatti never expressed any objection to his cat's musical studies, it was, therefore, Ponto's daily custom to abandon himself to the eccentricities of his genius, leaping and indulging in the most absurd antics as his tail swept over the chords, and sometimes, in the excess of emotion, singing one of the ancient melodies of his race, which melodies, it has been stated, are able to soften stones and to drive men to distraction. All this never disturbed Scarlatti; on the contrary, he laughed good-humouredly when his cat was siezed with his musical convulsions. In the evenings, however, the animal would sit in a corner of his beloved master's room, his countenance serious as that of a judge, while Scarlatti himself played the harp. That music must indeed have been beautiful, for all the birds which had been singing among the branches of the orange and myrtle trees flew to the open window to listen, and the roses pushed their heads into the room, crush-

ing one another in their haste and eagerness, so that many a delicate rosebud lost its life in the struggle. Scarlatti himself bore some likeness to the wonderful old bard Ossian; but he was not, like him, bowed down with sorrow and care. No wonder that as the cat, who was sorrowing for a departed bride, heard the wondrous music, his tender heart melted into anguish, and his green eyes overflowed with tears. When Scarlatti observed the animal's swimming eyes, he would draw his faithful four-footed companion towards him, kissing and caressing him until he regained his wonted wild spirits.

The cat led a most delightful life with his gentle master, for he stood Scarlatti in the stead of friend, wife, and child, never leaving him night or day. If Scarlatti was composing, Ponto must sit motionless on his left shoulder, but softly stroke his master's head with the white tip of his tail. When Scarlatti's thoughts refused to flow freely, when the malicious ink thickened into an unreadable mass, or when his hand grew weary, he would sometimes grow irritable and impatient; at such times a hasty shrug of his shoulders would precipitate Ponto from his elevated position to the middle of the floor. He never seemed offended, however, but remained as meek towards his rough master as a prudent wife in the presence of her scolding husband. After a few moments of sorrowful banishment he would softly return, and with a purr of infinite satisfaction reascend the throne from which he had been so unceremoniously deposed. But he had his reward when his master at last laid pen and paper aside, for Scarlatti did not grudge his favourite a thousand caresses, and many substantial proofs of his

esteem, which caused the animal's stomach to feel indescribable satisfaction.

All this would have been very pleasant and delightful, if Sunday, the only sad day for Ponto, had not come round quite so often; for on Sunday a wild young student would take up his quarters with Scarlatti, remaining until the earth, grown weary of light and heat, was enveloped in the starry mantle of night. The Sunday guest was one of Scarlatti's favourite pupils, his home was far away in Germany, and his name was Hasse. Ponto knew all this, and had often observed the young man's delicate red and white complexion, and his brown curls. He was the merriest, most impudent fellow in the whole world, and his chief delight was to torment and insult honest Ponto in every imaginable manner. He would fasten a bell to his tail, put babies' shoes on his feet, crown him with roses, or cover him with orange-blossoms, the powerful scent of which flowers Ponto could not endure, as it always brought on violent sneezing fits. Besides all this, Hasse possessed a little wicked dog, white as snow, with knowing brown eyes. He was lively and graceful in the extreme, and even Ponto, his sworn foe, was compelled to acknowledge that he was charming. This much-indulged favourite was, if possible, even more heedless, wild, and uproarious than his master, and by his impertinence he worried Ponto almost to a skeleton.

It was Sunday; the cat sprang wildly to and fro as he performed on his favourite instrument. Scarlatti sat as we have above described him, his eyes fixed on the distant landscape; and behold, the much-dreaded guest appeared before Ponto had concluded his first

prelude. The young man's step was light and cheerful, and his charming companion ran and leapt at his side.

'Good morning, Meister Scarlatti!' cried the new comer, his voice and glance hearty as his words; 'how glad I am to see you!'

Scarlatti nodded and smiled, half in pleasure at the friendly greeting, half in derision of the speaker's curious German accent, and replied,—

'I shall be a very bad friend and companion to-day. Hasse. I have many ideas in my head, many tones are buzzing in my ears, but they will not form themselves into melodies. I am seeking something peculiarly original, and that I cannot find it drives me to distraction. I pray you to leave me in peace with your tricks, or I will wring the neck of your little spoilt dog.'

'Stop, stop, Meister Scarlatti!' cried the guest. 'I can see that you are in a bad humour, but you must not touch my little Treulieb; you know that he was the parting gift of my fair-haired German sweetheart; and he follows me everywhere, an emblem of her love and faith.'

'Scarlatti, with a good-humoured smile, turned towards his pupil, and gazed in his bright, almost childlike countenance. The young man was leaning against an orange-tree, his eyes lifted up to the heavens, he seemed to dream of his dear home so far away, of his beautiful Germany, with its bright sky, green trees, gay flowers, and snow-crowned mountains. Or perhaps his thoughts had flown to the loveliest of flowers, to his loving, faithful sweetheart. The clouds which had darkened his youthful forehead soon, how-

ever, passed away, as Treulieb sprang upon him and licked his hands, while Scarlatti again lost himself in deep thought, leaving to his pupil the care of maintaining order in his little dominion.

For a short time all was well, and the young man prudently admonished the two animals. At the close of his discourse, however, he drew from his pocket a little wig and a small pair of spectacles, with which, in spite of Ponto's desperate resistance, he proceeded to adorn the silent, but furious animal. These proceedings seemed to afford Treulieb infinite satisfaction; he barked loudly, and danced before the much-enduring victim. Scarlatti cast a glance upon the group, and could not restrain a smile, but he was far from revealing his weakness to his mischievous pupil, on the contrary, he gave vent to some tolerably angry growls, so that Hasse, dreading the outbreak of his displeasure, retreated with the two animals to Scarlatti's study. The old clavichord stood open, and the young man's hands flew over the keys as he played a furious witches' dance. Treulieb sprang as if beside himself, uttered one cry of joy, and sprang on the miserable Ponto's back, tenderly embracing the cat's neck with his little white paws. Then, at length, the patience of Ponto's noble mind gave way. Thinking, 'to be or not to be,' he rushed, nay, almost flew, round and round the room, still carrying his burden on his back. He tried to run up the walls, he leapt, screaming and spluttering, over chairs and tables, until Scarlatti's papers were scattered like chaff before the wind, and a cloud of dust filled the room. Hasse ran to the rescue; but calling and scolding were in vain.

At length Ponto grew weary. Shame at the insults

which had been heaped upon him, anger at his own weakness, developed in his brain a glorious idea; he would summon his master to help and protect him. Without hesitation, he sprang upon the keys of the clavichord, leapt hither and thither, and twice ran wildly up and down, giving utterance to the piercing cry for help so well known to his race. At the first notes of this strange music, Treulieb sank fainting from the shoulders of the inspired cat, and a dull chord proclaimed his fall; Ponto's spectacles followed; only the wig remained. The confused sounds became melodies, Hasse stood listening, and through the vine leaves and wild roses appeared Scarlatti's face, bright with the sunshine of the deepest rapture.

'Come to my heart, Ponto, you have found it!' he cried, and Ponto, almost fainting, rushed into his master's arms. Scarlatti immediately banished his madcap pupil until the next day.

When, on the morrow, the young man appeared before his master, Scarlatti's eyes beamed with triumph and pleasure as he showed Hasse a sheet of music-paper thickly covered with notes, and bearing in large letters the title, 'Cat Fugue.' Scarlatti seated himself at the instrument and played, when the youth, to his surprise and pleasure, immediately recognized in the ingeniously-composed fugue the piteous cries for help, and the weird, unearthly melodies produced by that wild race along the keys, the last resource of a persecuted cat. Both master and pupil laughed at the conclusion of the performance. The cat sat on his master's left shoulder, and Scarlatti, to his dying day, declared that Ponto had laughed as heartily as either of them.

In conclusion, I will impart to you a very important piece of information. Ponto was a great, great, great-uncle of the sister-in-law of the niece of the mother of Hoffmann's celebrated cat 'Murr.'

SNOWDROPS.

Glöcklein im Thale
Rieseln im Bach,
Säuseln in Lüften.
Schmelzendes Ach!
H. von Chezy.

On a little peaceful island, the Catholic burial-ground of royal Dresden, there is a sacred tomb, to which pilgrimages are often made by faithful souls, especially by those to whom the world of sound, so rich in wonders and mysteries, has been revealed—by those who have learned to bow in childlike humility before the might of all-powerful music. The lofty heavens form the dome of the chapel visited by the pious worshippers, the pilgrims kneel on a simple grey stone, their only image is a star-crowned lyre, and their breviaries contain but these words:—

'Carl Maria von Weber.'

Yes, here, in this haven of peace, rest the remains of our honoured one! here our much-honoured Weber sleeps his long, dreamless sleep, resting after many a hard-won battle, after many a glorious victory. Wounded by the thorns of life, he sang his last song

in solitude, far from his beloved home; and then—his voice was silent for ever. The world decked his corpse with laurel, buried it in his country's ground, and showered upon the dead all the honours which it had denied to the living. Many a bitter tear of remorse may well have fallen among the thousand drops of sorrow and gratitude which flowed for the slumberer.

It often seems as though we had dreamed a lovely, happy dream, in which the great musician lived, sang, and suffered among us; yet the years are but few which have passed since the happy time when he dwelt on earth. His quiet house stood in a dark, narrow Dresden street; the melodies and wondrous tones in which his soul delighted, and which will enrapture future generations to the end of time, poured through a little flower-concealed window. How often did the streams of harmony which filled his heart flow out into the silent night! Listeners, forgetting sleep and weariness, would crowd into the narrow street, and as the refreshing rain of melody poured down upon their thirsting souls, they would secretly, earnestly bless the giver for his heavenly comfort. The thoughtful affection of a faithful wife gave true happiness to the great musician, unbounded love shone in the eyes of his children, but their touching, self-sacrificing devotion was powerless to smooth the stony path which their loved one must tread, or to ward off the sharp thorns of malice and envy which wounded his heart. How often did it bleed, that noble, tender heart!

But all sorrow, all trouble was forgotten and buried when the spring returned, decking with countless charms the lovely country which surrounded the dark

city, when the flowers arose from their tiny graves and the trees put forth their thousand blossoms—eyes which are not dazzled as they gaze into the sun's bright countenance; when every creature rejoiced in its existence. A simple bunch of lilies-of-the-valley or violets delighted and uplifted Weber's soul, and the sweet perfume of the flowers was transformed by his golden lyre into charming spring melodies, flower songs, and fairy legends. His favourite flowers were the snowdrops, those delicate white blossoms, pure and spotless as the soul of an infant. Every year, in the first days of spring, a large bunch of his white favourites was brought to him by a child, a gentle, pleasant girl, the daughter of a miller. The mill lay solitary and almost hidden in the lovely Plau valley, and Weber's wanderings had often led him in that direction. The child would never take payment for her flowers.

'Oh, play me something!' she would timidly whisper; and Weber played, a bright smile upon his face as he rejoiced in the silent rapture of the listening child.

Thus the years passed on, until Weber one day observed that the girl had become tall, slight, and handsome; the child was growing into the blooming maiden. But when she returned with the next spring she was pale, oh! unutterably pale, and death gazed out from her sunken eyes. She wept bitterly as she presented her white blossoms to her friend, and as he, according to custom, played her sweet, tuneful fairy-tales.

'I shall not come next spring,' she said, as she took her leave; 'farewell! To-morrow they will weave the bridal wreath into my hair, and then I shall be a wife!'

'And is that the cause of your sorrow, dear child?' said Weber, endeavouring to smile. 'I think my dear girl is beginning to tell *me* stories now; how seldom has a bride wept over her pretty green wreath!'

'I am not to marry him I love!' sobbed the girl; 'ah! a stranger will lead me to his home. My lover left me last Christmas-day; he went out into the wide world, without one word of farewell! How can I be happy?' and she wrung her thin hands, her lovely features expressing heart-piercing anguish.

And when the lovely spring returned, and the snowdrops in the valley were ringing their tiny bells, an old sorrowful-looking man, clad in simple attire, inquired for the house of 'Tonmeister Weber.' As he entered Weber's little room, he greeted the musician with a mournful smile, and presented to him a handful of lovely snowdrops.

'I bring you my child's last greeting!' said the old man's trembling voice; 'our Margaret was buried yesterday. She died like a flower cut down by the frost; and oh! she was so glad to die. Love had broken her heart, and her wretched parents were the cause of her death. Oh! if we had known that she loved him so dearly, the handsome Conrad, we should never have driven him from our door. The honest lad, with his faithful, loving heart, was too poor for us, the rich miller who courted our lovely child pleased us better, and as Conrad's love was so modest, and our Margaret as unsuspecting, calm, and loving as a budding rose, we dared to tell Conrad that our child despised him, and had bestowed her heart and hand upon her wealthy suitor. And when the youth, so proud in all his misery, had secretly left the village, our Margaret began to fade

away—then we knew our hearts. But not until she lay upon her death-bed did she confess how dearly she had loved the absent one; in spite of her secret, heavy sorrow she had been a faithful, gentle wife to her husband. She never mentioned her Conrad's name; but we found this little paper in her prayer-book. Keep it in remembrance of her, for you have been a kind friend to my poor child; she was always so impatient for the first snowdrops to appear. Do not forget poor Margaret!'

The unhappy parent could say no more, burning tears of remorse ran down his cheeks.

When Weber again found himself alone he thoughtfully unfolded the little sheet of paper, and read with some difficulty, for the writing was indistinct, almost obliterated by the tears which had fallen upon it:—

'Mein Schatz, der ist auf die Wanderschaft hin,
Drum kommt's dass ich jetzt so traurig bin.
Vielleicht ist er todt, und liegt in guter Ruh',
Drum bring' ich meine Zeit so traurig zu.

Als ich mit meinem Schatz zur Kirche wollte gehn,
Viel falsche, falsche Zungen an der Thüre stehn;
Die Einen sagten dies, die Andern sagten dass,
Das macht mir noch jetzt die Augen nass.

Die Disteln und die Dornen, die stechen gar zu sehr,
Die falschen, falschen, Zungen aber noch viel mehr;
Kein Feuer, keine Kohle brennt doch so heiss
Als heimliche Liebe, die Niemand nicht weiss.

Ach Gott! was hat mein' Vater und mein' Mutter gethan,
Sie haben mich gezwungen zu 'nem andern Mann!
Zu 'nem ehrlichen Mann, den ich nimmermehr lieb'
Das macht mir das arme Herz so trüb.

Ach herzliebster Schatz, ich bitte dich gar fein,
Die wollest bei meinem Begräbniss sein!
Bei meinen Begräbniss ins tiefe, kühle Grab,
Weil ich dich so sehr geliebet hab'.'

And Weber did not forget poor Margaret; the song of the faithful lover so far away was ever in his thoughts, until one evening his fingers softly glided over the keys as he composed a melody, strangely heart-stirring and sad, yet remarkable in its simplicity, wonderfully adapted to the words of the song. Long-sustained chords formed the mournful accompaniment, but it seemed as though a thousand tear-drops trembled in the tones, and the sighs of sorrowful, loving hearts were heard amidst the harmonies. Thus a new and never-fading spring blossom arose from the inexhaustible riches of Weber's soul, and he laid it down upon the lonely grave of the unhappy Margaret.

Sing this little song, so sweet amid its sadness, when your hearts are filled with anxious fears or mournful recollections. Long-forgotten griefs will arise and whisper, 'Give us yet one sigh, offer us one tear, and we will sleep until you again awake us.' But at length, as we listen to the sweet, soft cords of that simple song, sorrow, pain, and earnest longings will melt away in a flood of heart-soothing tears.

When your admiring eyes rest upon the unfading wreath of immortal creations which encircles the head of our glorious musician, when the beautiful magic flowers, 'Euryanthe' and 'Oberon,' the ever-blooming rosebud, 'Freischütz,' the sweet lily of the valley, 'Preziosa,' the countless songs and other buds and flowers dazzle and entrance you, do not forget the little snowdrop whose fairy bells chime so sweetly as it hides behind its stately companions. Welcome it with heart and voice, and gratefully thank our dear Meister for his charming gift! For truly this snowdrop, this tender, mournful lament for the wandering love, is a glittering dew-drop

shining among the brightest golden laurels won by our immortal Weber.

THE PLAYFELLOWS.

A MAY day under the bright, beaming sky of Italy has a charm which we children of the north fail to understand; only in our dreams do we sometimes see a faint picture of its glories. The earth smiles as she arrays herself in loveliest attire, the sun, in passionate admiration, casts his burning eye upon his beloved, and the whole air is full of sweetness. Men's hearts grow warmer, glowing and rejoicing as they gaze upon the glories around them, and man's eye is bright and fiery as that of the sun, a cold, weary expression of countenance is as seldom seen there as a frost-flower.

For these reasons there seemed something remarkable in the demeanour of a boy who, one day in the month of May 1793, sat alone on the shore, gazing over the glittering expanse of waters. Behind him lay the beautiful town of Genoa, a happy bride reposing on the bosom of the sea. The boy was about ten years of age, his features were finely formed, but pale, he had dark hair and eyebrows, and the most wonderful black eyes in the world. These eyes were almost unearthly in their rapid change of expression; now they were fiery, triumphant, and proud, now sorrowful even unto death.

The bright, merry voice of a child roused the youthful dreamer from his dreary thoughts; a charming little

girl ran towards him, and threw her arms round his neck, crying,—

'Naughty Nicolo, where have you been all this long afternoon? I have sought you everywhere!'

She kissed him passionately, gazed at him with her great brown eyes, and finally shook from her apron a quantity of flowers, wild roses, myrtle and orange-blossoms, which fell to the ground before him. Nicolo embraced the little speaker, smiled almost joyfully as he stroked her wild black curls, and whispered,—

'I have escaped from my father, Gianetta; I wanted to dream and be happy here, by the lovely bright sea; you know your playfellow's favourite resort!'

Gianetta, instead of answering, began to murmur against the cruelty of her young friend's father. 'He gives you no rest, night or day!' she cried; 'he will bring you to your grave. My mother often says to me, "Thy Nicolo is not strong and active, his violin preys upon his spirit, and his father destroys his bodily strength." She must be right,' added Gianetta, sorrowfully.

'Do not think so!' gravely answered Nicolo; 'I shall not die, I must not die, for I must first become a great man. And I am not weak; see here,' and as he drew himself up to his full height, seeming much taller than before, his eyes burning with the wildest fire, and a strange smile playing upon his countenance, he suddenly lifted Gianetta, and his powerful arms held her over the water beneath them. The child did not turn pale, but she sighed as Nicolo released her; she said not a word, but timidly gazed upon her companion. Soon, however, she regained her wonted cheerfulness; she chattered and sang, and Nicolo

patiently listened to her thousand childish plans, and to her stories of flowers and doves. If he relapsed into mournful thoughts as he listened to her merry talk, he was aroused by a kiss or by a caress from Gianetta's little hands. Thus they sat together on the sea shore; over them was the deep blue vault of heaven, and the bright sunshine fell upon their youthful features; but the boy's countenance was grave and sorrowful, a striking contrast to Gianetta's bright, happy smile.

When it grew dark they arose and sauntered, arm-in-arm, in the direction of their home. They passed through many broad streets, and at last turned into a little side walk; two houses stood there, thickly covered with vines. Gianetta's mother lived in one of them, Nicolo's father in the other. The boy was greeted by a gloomy countenance of a hard, severe parent; Gianetta's mother stood at her door, listening anxiously, and welcomed her wild little daughter with a tender kiss. The children said 'good-night,' and parted.

Nicolo entered his lonely room, and sighed deeply as he hastily threw open the low window to admit the beautiful night air. He then took from a small, coffin-like box an old violin, on which he gazed with the deepest tenderness, and began to play. The pure, heart-stirring sounds flowed out into the night, or surged and soared within the narrow room until the walls seemed to tremble and shake before the mighty sounds. As the first tone rose into the air, a beautifully-marked spider of enormous size crept out from among the vines which surrounded the window.

'Welcome, Silberkreuzchen,' said Nicolo, softly, and

laid his hand upon the window-sill. The spider hastily drew near, and Nicolo placed it upon the neck of his violin, to which the insect's tiny feet clung firmly, as motionless and still she listened to the flood of harmony which surged around her. The boy played until his arm grew weary, until his eyelids began to droop, and the morning, wrapped in her rosy veil, was gazing into the room. He then laid down his violin, the spider regained its powers of motion, and crept, by way of grateful thanks, through Nicolo's thin hand. The boy carried it to the window, and it quickly disappeared among the vine leaves.

Nicolo's eyes followed it, and a feeling of comfortless solitude came over him, a feeling by which he was overcome every night when his spider, the companion of his dreary childhood, had hastened away. He regarded the faithful little creature with heartfelt affection; at the first sound of his violin it would hasten from its hiding-place, and not until the last tone had ceased to vibrate did it awake from the wonderful, delightful dreams summoned by the melodies. Often as Nicolo stood lost in gloomy thoughts, or dreaming of the fulfilment of his proud hopes and ambitious desires as his fingers mechanically touched the strings, the spider came softly to him, and Nicolo felt its gentle touch, closed his eyes and forgot that he was lonely, and that no one loved him. His father was a severe taskmaster, his gentle mother was dead, boys of his own age shrank timidly from him, and only little Gianetta played with and kissed him; but Nicolo's affections were divided between the lovely child and the strange friend who dwelt beneath his window. Gianetta could not bear spiders. 'They are witches!'

she would timidly cry; and Nicolo never placed Silberkreuzchen upon his violin when the child was with him, and had seated herself in a corner of the room, listening to the wonderful music. The spider seemed to know this, for it never came into the room while Gianetta was there; but if Nicolo, as he played, drew near to the window, and cast a secret but searching glance around, he was sure to see his dumb favourite hanging motionless from a vine leaf. Gianetta, however, was never satisfied when his arm sank down from weariness, and the violin was silent; Nicolo must tell her stories, and he was very glad to do so. The listening child heard not only wild and horrible tales—no, he laid all the dreams of his ambitious soul before the lovely, faithful girl. And she answered him not a word, but pressed his hot, feverish hand, and gazed upon him with wonderfully clear, intelligent eyes. His cheeks glowed, he trembled with excitement, and scalding tears of anger streamed from his eyes as he told of the great German Mozart, that bright star in the sky of music, and how, in his sixth year, he had composed great concertos.

'See, Gianetta,' he would say, with a bitter smile, 'what a wretched bungler I am, compared with him!' And the child was powerless to comfort her friend.

One day Nicolo had played his monotonous exercises under his father's supervision, and was tormented by the most bitter mental pangs. His hands were weary, his forehead burning, all the power and life of his body shone forth from his eyes, but these were remarkably brilliant. He heard the voice of Gianetta's mother hastily and anxiously calling his name, and hurried towards her. Gianetta had been taken sud-

denly ill, seized by a raging fever. She gazed long and earnestly upon him; he understood the look and brought his violin. His heart was filled with passionate, stormy thoughts, and he cried, wildly,—

'Gianetta! a slumber-song for you!'

She answered by a smile, and the boy's violin sang the strangest, sweetest, and most entrancing of slumber-songs. As the music ceased, Gianetta raised herself and uttered Nicolo's name; he threw himself into her arms.

'Thanks, my dearest!' she whispered, softly. 'Nicolo, my sleep will be sweet! But you must not rest; you must shine on earth, a bright and glorious star. Wander far, far away from here! Think of me and of my words.' One gentle sigh, and the lovely child bowed her head and died.

Nicolo stood all night beside the corpse; the next day he wandered frantically and aimlessly from place to place. It was late when he returned to his home; his dark and silent chamber filled him with horror; but from the window he could gaze into Gianetta's room. Candles were burning there. The child lay upon a bier, adorned with, and almost concealed by, a profusion of flowers, angelic in her loveliness; a monk knelt beside the coffin, praying for the pure young soul so soon released from the mortal body.

'Farewell, sweet heart!' said the mourner softly, and burning tears ran down his pale cheeks. 'I will wander far away, as far as I can! I have nothing to keep me here, alone and unloved as I am!'

He fell on his knees and sobbed convulsively. At that moment he felt a strange, gentle touch upon his hand; he started up. It was the spider. 'Is it

thou, my mute friend? alas, thou art now the only companion of my life!' cried Nicolo, and a ray of pleasure passed over his features as he thoughtfully gazed upon the faithful creature. At length he raised himself and cried,—

'One last farewell to Gianetta, and then I will away into the wide world with thee, the glorious, mighty, heavenly friend of my heart!'

He wildly pressed his violin to his heart, and then the music poured forth more wonderful, more mysterious than ever before, tones trembling with agony yet full of entrancing beauty soared over to the slumbering Gianetta; the corpse seemed to smile, the lovely flowers trembled, the monk's folded hands sank down, and strange, wonderful dreams took possession of him. When the glorious eye of the morning sun looked into the little room, it saw lying upon the ground a half-fainting boy, his arm still embracing his violin, to which clung tightly—a dead spider.

Was the prophecy of the lovely Gianetta fulfilled?

The boy's name was Nicolo Paganini. Did you ever hear of him?

JOHANN RUDOLF ZUMSTEEG.

WHO has not heard or read of the splendid Academy which Duke Carl of Wurtemberg erected upon Solitüde, not far from his charming capital of Stuttgart. The names of celebrated men bear over the wide world and throughout many generations the fame of

this institution—names whose sound, even now, causes many a heart to beat more quickly. Others went forth from the Academy, men who might be compared to the glittering stars whose mild light we love when our souls are filled with longings and gentle sorrow, but which are soon forgotten amid the bustle of the bright and busy day.

It is of such a man that I am about to speak; his light reaches us from another world, where he has long since gone to dwell. He was once much admired and beloved, and now he is numbered among the forgotten ones. The world is strangely, sadly forgetful!

On the 15th September, 1782, a slight young man sat in one of those smaller rooms which are appointed for private practice to the pupils of the Academy, he held between his knees a violoncello, upon which he gazed with tender affection. His name was Johann Rudolf Zumsteeg, and he was one of the most accomplished pupils of the Academy, remarkable alike for his talent, industry, and amiability of disposition; he was, moreover, an excellent violoncellist. He had been admitted to Solitüde at the earnest entreaty of his father, a favourite servant of the Duke. Rudolf's father had at first intended him to become a sculptor, and he had already executed models in clay under the supervision of an excellent master; but the boy's talent for music was so decided that he was soon allowed to devote himself, body and soul, to this his true vocation. Capellmeister Poli instructed him in composition, while the indefatigable young musician eagerly studied Matheson and Marpurg, and devoted himself to the works of Bach, Benda, and Jomelli.

If ever a human countenance bore the stamp of a true musician, that stamp was seen in the features of young Rudolf. That sweet, gentle melancholy, without which no true musician's countenance seems perfect, rested upon his noble forehead, mingled with his beaming smile, and calmed the fiery glance of his great black eyes. He shook back his thick hair, bent forward, and his bow had touched the strings of his instrument, when the door opened, and a tall young man entered, leading a charming little girl six or seven years of age. A bright ray of joy passed over the musician's countenance; he sprang up, leant his cello against a chair, and embraced the new-comer with a mixture of timidity and passionate affection.

'What do you wish from me, my Friedrich? What happy thought brings you here at this unwonted hour?' he cried, excitedly, stooping to kiss the child, who silently but fearlessly gazed up at him with her lovely blue eyes.

'My father and mother came here this morning from Ludwigsburg,' was the answer; 'they will pass one day in Stuttgart, and as I have a half holiday I begged for my youngest sister Nanette, who is quite wild with joy when she hears music. Play me something, Rudolf, I have a strange longing for the soft tones of your cello!' He threw himself upon a chair, placed the child upon his knee, and gazed at Rudolf with a gaze full of expectation.

Those were wonderful eyes! True, the eyelids were slightly tinged with red, but *genius*—that bright ray from another world—shone forth in the glance; they were eyes which could only belong to a wonderful man. Thick reddish hair, carelessly thrown back,

the noblest of foreheads, a dazzling complexion, a handsome profile, a tall but not upright figure—this was Zumsteeg's friend, this was our Friedrich Schiller, the glorious, immortal poet, at that time a student in the Karlsschule.

Rudolf was far from opposing his friend's wishes; he silently took his instrument and began to play. Deep melancholy took possession of his mind, he knew not why, and the mournful strains grew into a simple, indescribably plaintive melody, which was plainly heard among all the passages, modulations, and variations, and would not be silenced. Perhaps no violoncellist of later years has ever played with Zumsteeg's wonderful tenderness, has ever delighted his hearers with Zumsteeg's truly poetical expression. Those of his contemporaries who heard him play, united in enthusiastic praise of the sweet melancholy, heart-stirring power, and remarkable tenderness of his music. He may have been surpassed in point of bravura, but no violoncello could ever sing so sweetly as his.

On that day his beloved cello seemed to sing even more sweetly than usual, for the listeners forget the time and sat motionless. When at last his arm sank down from weariness, Schiller arose, gently placed little Nanette upon the ground, eagerly seized his friend by the shoulders, bent him back, gazed into his eyes and cried,—

'You are all heart, man! who would not love you? Thanks for your poem in tones, it was more beautiful, more glowing than my words could express. Do not forget this hour, dear friend; I shall always remember it.'

And he turned as if to go.

'That was almost like a farewell!' said the astonished Zumsteeg; 'where are you going, rash one? you are forgetting your charming little sister.

'Your music, too, sounded like a farewell!' said Schiller, as he turned back. 'Nanette, come with me!'

'No, I will stay with you,' cried the child passionately, and clung to the musician; 'pray, pray, let me hear the angels sing again!' And she stretched out her plump, round arms, and as Rudolf lifted her she clung firmly to his neck, pressed her little pale face against him, and repeatedly kissed his cheeks. She parted from her new friend with bitter tears, and not until after many earnest remonstrances.

Two days after this little scene Stuttgart was plunged in the deepest excitement; the heads of young and old, high and low, were filled with thoughts of a great deer-hunt which the duke had planned for the entertainment of his guest, the Grand Prince of Russia, afterwards the Emperor Paul. The royal guests, the splendid dress of the Grand Princess, and the glittering suite formed almost the sole topic of conversation. On the 17th of September, that well-known event, Friedrich Schiller's flight from the Karlsschule, took place. He left Stuttgart in the dusk of evening, carrying in his pocket his half-finished tragedy, 'Fiesco.' Thus it happened that Rudolf Zumsteeg had indeed played a farewell song.

How seldom do we find, in our cold northern climate, hearts which can bear within them such a supply of genial warmth that their thoughts and feelings resemble tropical plants, dazzling and almost

startling us by their splendour and vivid colouring—hearts whose love is a mixture of passionate admiration and eternal fidelity! Rudolf Zumsteeg had a heart such as this. Since his arrival at Solitüde he had divided his attention between his studies and his friend Friedrich Schiller; his admiration for the poet knew no bounds. If Schiller had at any moment required his life, Zumsteeg would gladly have died for him. He was one of the first to perceive the radiant halo around the head of his friend, before whom Europe bowed in admiration, every page which bore Schiller's handwriting was carefully preserved by Zumsteeg, and his chief delight was to compose melodies adapted to his friend's poems. Every meeting with Schiller, however brief, was a ray of light in the history of his life, therefore his sorrow for the loss of his friend was deep beyond description, his absence was scarcely endurable, and not an hour passed without a sigh for the fugitive. He shed bitter tears, and thought himself unable to endure the separation from the light of his life. He could not bring himself to visit Schiller's sorrowing family in their abode at Ludwigsburg; he anxiously avoided all who had been in any way connected with his friend, and was indeed far advanced upon the road to dejection. His secret correspondence with his friend was but a slight consolation, for Schiller wrote little at this disturbed period of his life. Zumsteeg did not, it is true, relax in his zeal and love for music; but results, which would formerly have delighted him beyond description, now gave him very moderate satisfaction. Concertos and fantasias for the violoncello were published, and in one of these concertos he introduced the farewell song which he had

played to Schiller. Thus did he endeavour to drive the melody from his recollection; he wished to be rid of it at any price, no one could have persuaded him to play it again. At the same period he produced the music to Schiller's 'Räuber,' a mass, and a few operas, which were very successful. His compositions soon gained public favour; they were remarkable, however, rather for clearness and tenderness than for rich and forcible ideas.

Suddenly, but with the full force of the lightning's flash, a ray of light gleamed through the dark melancholy which surrounded the youthful musician—Mozart's name, Mozart's music. Rudolf Zumsteeg turned to this glorious being with the boundless devotion of which such natures are alone capable. The moment of his acquaintance with Mozart's genius was the beginning of a new epoch in the life of our young musician; his wings unfolded themselves in readiness for his glorious flight. With unutterable delight he revelled among Mozart's treasures, he saw nothing, thought of nothing but Mozart. Now, for the first time, he understood his own thoughts; now he understood what he had desired, yet never attained; he examined and criticised his own works with all the severity of an ascetic.

'I am not wanting in clearness and solidity,' he said; 'but what is that without the power to charm? My works are artificial flowers, the form is there, but the scent and the freshness which we admire in the most simple blossom is wanting. I was only sentimental where I imagined myself warm, declamatory instead of dramatic, pathetic instead of fiery.'

The scales fell from his eyes, and with renewed

courage he began his labours in a totally different direction. He had long since left the Karlsschule, bearing with him the most honourable testimonials, and now lived in Stuttgart, a teacher of music.

At this time, in the midst of his eager industry and glowing enthusiasm, one of his friends informed him that Mozart in the course of his travels would pass through Mannheim during the coming week, and, it was said, intended to pass a day in that town. This information threw Zumsteeg into the most intense excitement. Without communicating to any one his hastily-formed plan, he locked the door of his room and started on foot for Mannheim. He walked during three days in the roughest autumn weather, without even a cloak, hurrying towards the town where he hoped to see the glorious musician in whom his soul delighted. At length he reached Mannheim, and weary, travel-stained, his hair and garments in wild disorder, hastened through the streets until he stood before the inn where it was said that Mozart intended to lodge.

A travelling carriage passed along the road, a still youthful man leant out at the window, and his clear, beaming eyes met those of the weary musician. A wild cry escaped from Zumsteeg's lips, his eyes were fixed in passionate delight upon those pleasing features.

'That must be my Mozart!' cried a voice within him. The traveller smiled as if astonished, but his smile was indescribably sweet, he bowed as if to greet Zumsteeg, and the carriage passed on. Zumsteeg stood motionless, and watched the clumsy vehicle until it disappeared from his sight; then, without hesitation, without pausing to make any inquiry, he

turned, and in delighted silence wandered out through the gate at which he had entered only an hour before. He never knew and never inquired whether he had really seen his Mozart, but clung to his favourite delusion until the close of his life.

About a year after Mozart's death Zumsteeg obtained a post which had formerly been occupied by Poli, that of Capellmeister to the duke; and now at last he could work without being oppressed by the weight of daily cares. He composed the music to several of Bürger's ballads, a concerto for the violoncello, and the operas, 'Pfauenfest,' Kalif von Bagdad,' and 'Geisterinsel.' This last contained such a fund of musical riches and beauties that Rossini said of it,—

'Out of this one opera I could have composed ten others!'

Not Zumsteeg's native Stuttgart alone—all Germany was delighted by his compositions. No *soirée musicale* was perfect if Zumsteeg's songs were not included in the programme, and our grandfathers talk with a pleasure which almost makes them feel young again of the impression which 'Die Bussende,' 'Leonora,' 'Ritter Carl von Eichenhorst,' and others produced upon all sensitive minds.

It was one of Zumsteeg's remarkable characteristics, that in all his compositions he kept before his mind not the mass of musicians, not the general public, but that little band of chosen ones who were able to follow the thoughts of the composer and rightly to comprehend his ideas. He did not follow the tastes of fashion, he thought of no glittering results; his compositions were true pictures of his life and of his inward feelings—pure, warm, deep and thoughtful.

On the morning of the 10th December, 1796, the Capellmeister received a letter from Ludwigsburg, a few lines from Schiller's eldest sister, who was married, but now on a visit to her parents. Zumsteeg was in a particularly happy, thankful mood, his beloved wife having on the previous day presented him with a daughter, his fourth child; the mournful contents of the letter, however, soon turned his joy into sorrow. It informed him that Nanette, the youngest sister of his friend, the lovely child who had clung to him so fondly, had been seized with a sudden and dangerous illness, and constantly called for Zumsteeg and his violoncello, repeating her request earnestly and longingly, and refusing to be pacified; he was earnestly entreated to come.

Zumsteeg had seldom seen Nanette since that memorable morning at Solitüde, and had scarcely noticed the gentle, timid girl who coloured and drew back when he appeared; but now he seemed to see the lovely child, he was again surrounded by all the delights of that brief scene, again he heard that sweet voice as it cried imploringly, 'Pray, pray let me hear the angels sing once more!'

Without hesitation he packed up his violoncello, took leave of his wife and children for one day, and set out for Ludwigsburg. It was evening when his carriage stopped before the Schillers' little house, and he was at once led into the sick-room, where all the relatives of the sufferer were assembled. Zumsteeg could not distinguish their features, for the room was lighted only by a single lamp, which stood on a small table near the bed, shedding all its rays upon the occupant. Nanette lay perfectly still, her snowy night-

dress scarcely whiter than her features. She bore a great likeness to her brother; but Zumsteeg now for the first time perceived this resemblance, and could scarcely restrain his tears. Her features were finer than Friedrich's, her forehead more childish and not so lofty, her hair brown. The loveliness of nineteen years rested upon her whole countenance, but in her eyes might be seen the sweet yet bitter farewell to all things earthly. Her greeting to the new-comer was a smile, so calm and trustful that it seemed to say, 'I knew you would come!' As he stood by her bedside she whispered, almost inaudibly, 'Oh, how I wish to hear the angels sing, as sweetly as they sang then!' And she sang, in a voice so low as to be scarcely heard except by Zumsteeg, the melody which as a child she had heard, which she had ever since carried in her heart as her dearest, most sacred secret. The heart of the deeply sorrowing Zumsteeg was moved to suspect that perhaps a secret attachment was here sinking to the silent grave, that a pure white rosebud had blossomed unheeded, that a loving heart was breaking in unrequited affection; and as he, with a heavy sigh, bent over the young girl's hand, a burning tear fell upon it. Oh, how that white hand trembled and quivered under its burden!

Then he retired with his violoncello to the farthest corner of the room and began to play, very, very softly, at first reluctantly, then, animated by thoughts of the present and recollections of the past, he played more entrancingly than ever before. His heart seemed to sing, and weep, and pray, and as he played on and on the room was filled with the sighs and sobs of the listeners.

When at last the sounds died away, that melody had again become a farewell song, an eternal farewell to the lovely girl who now, with a blissful smile, took leave of earth, delivered from the heavy griefs of secret but passionate love.

About six years later, on the 26th January, 1802, a report which greatly excited the joyful anticipations of the inhabitants was circulated through the town of Stuttgart. It was said that Marianne Kirchgässner, the celebrated performer on the harmonica, had arrived, and intended to give a concert that evening.

It was true; Marianne Kirchgässner had just arrived in Stuttgart. This lady was not alone remarkable for her proficiency in playing the harmonica, but also interesting on account of her misfortunes, which must indeed have aroused the sympathy of all compassionate hearts. The small-pox had stricken her with blindness when she was only four years of age, and music, that all-powerful comforter, had alone preserved the child's heart from despair. Her remarkable musical talent soon gained her a noble friend and protector in the person of Freiherr von Beroldingen, Domcapitular at Speier. His compassion for and interest in the talented but unfortunate child was manifested in a truly generous manner; he purchased for her, at considerable expense, a splendid harmonica, for it seemed to him that Marianne was particularly affected by the strangely heart-stirring tones of this instrument. It is impossible to describe the happiness caused by this generous gift. Marianne's patron now sent her to Karlsruhe, where she was instructed by Schmittbauer, the Capellmeister and per-

former on the harmonica, with an eagerness and care only surpassed by the industry and perseverance of his talented pupil. She made truly wonderful progress, and soon attained unrivalled perfection in her performance. She had scarcely completed her twenty-first year when she began her professional tour through Germany and Russia. Stuttgart was one of the first towns at which she performed, and the inhabitants crowded to hear her. Zumsteeg had arranged the programme, and himself conducted several orchestral pieces, but Marianne Kirchgässner's performance had such an effect upon him that only by a strong effort was he enabled to remain in the concert-room. Marianne Kirchgässner reaped unbounded applause, and was compelled to perform a short piece in addition to those announced in the programme. Was the fair performer desirous of giving a pleasant surprise to the friendly Capellmeister? or did she herself admire the mournful melody which had twice been so significant? Be that as it may, she began to play Zumsteeg's concerto which contained the farewell song.

As the first notes, wonderful, almost unearthly in their vibration, floated through the hall, Zumsteeg started, and convulsively pressed his hand to his heart. Was not that the voice of the gentle Nanette who had died so peacefully? He could not wait for the end, but staggered from the room and fainted.

In the following night, to the great terror of his family, he was seized by protracted and painful convulsions. The next morning he seemed out of danger, and tenderly reassured his distressed family, but added, with a gentle smile,—

"This is the 27th January, my Mozart's birthday. If I am to die soon, I should wish to die to-day, for then, perhaps, I should not be so quickly forgotten!"

A few minutes later he was seized by a new and terrible attack of convulsions, then Mozart, the bright, glorious Mozart, bent down from heaven to welcome that gentle, loving soul.

A MEETING.

Sah ein Knab' ein Röslein stehn,
Röslein auf der Haiden,
War so jung und morgenschön,
Lief er schnell es nah zu sehn,
Sah's mit vielen Freuden.
Röslein, Röslin, Röslein roth
Röslein auf der Haiden.

It was many years since the fine old town of Strasburg had decked itself so gaily as on this 12th May, 1767. The gardens formed a many-coloured wreath around the city; buds and tender green leaves were everywhere to be seen. The tall cathedral gazed proudly upon the beautiful landscape; the waves of the Rhine rose and fell like the breast of some powerful giant; the clear stream of the Ill rushed in mad haste to unite itself with those majestic waves; the villages were almost buried beneath the snow-white blossoms of the cherry-trees; and from all sides sounded the Sabbath bells, seeming to exhort the listeners at once to joy and to devotion.

On this same morning a young man, about twenty years of age, sauntered, without purpose, as it seemed, through the gates of the city, cheerfully humming that old French melody, Henry IV.'s tender love-song,—

'Oh charmante Gabrièle.'

The singer's face was rosy and finely formed, his neatness, graceful bearing, and expression of delightful freedom from care gave him a most pleasant appearance, his forehead was noble and thoughtful, and his eyes were remarkable for their fiery and enthusiastic expression. The light-hearted wanderer had travelled from Basle to Strasburg on the previous evening, accompanied by a friend, and intended in the course of twelve hours to proceed on his journey to Paris. His name was André Modeste Ernest Grétry. His companion wished to spend a few hours with an old aunt in Strasburg before proceeding on his journey, and as the lively Grétry was inclined to consider a tête-à-tête with the young and lovely Dame Nature more delightful than a conversation with his friend's aged and somewhat dried-up relative, he determined to dream away the day in the neighbourhood of the ancient city. Grétry was a musician, be it said, and such curious fellows were always allowed to dream, whenever it pleased them to do so.

André Grétry was born at Liège, in Belgium. He was tenderly beloved by his parents, and music and song had surrounded him from his earliest infancy. His father, first violinist at St. Martin, played to the child all kinds of melodies, at which the infant, when six months of age, would kick and shout in highest

delight; he was soothed to rest by the melodious voice of his mother. When he had reached his sixth year he was, at his own earnest request, instructed in music, which soon became the delight of his young life; but as he grew older he was not satisfied with the extent of the instruction he was receiving, he wished to study composition. He was introduced to Reinke, an excellent musician, under whose guidance his brilliant talents were developed; he was so industrious, so talented, and so grateful for instruction that his master considered as recreation the time which he devoted to his promising pupil. Reinke took good care that Grétry should *hear* as much as possible; he went with him to concerts and musical masses, and pointed out the merits or defects of the performance. At this time there were in Liège many Italian singers, whose music made a great impression upon the boy's sensitive mind. He learned to know the heart-stirring creations of Pergolesi, Galuppi, Palestrina, and Lotti, and as he listened to their master-pieces the desire to compose grew stronger and stronger within him. Day and night he thought only of being a good musician, and in his simple prayers he never failed to implore God and the Virgin for the fulfilment of this earnest desire. When on the day of his first communion he appeared before his parents, his gentle mother embraced him tenderly as she said,—

'If you have any earnest wish, my son, do not hesitate to confide it to the mighty Queen of Heaven; to-day she will surely grant the desires of all good children who humbly pray to her.'

In deepest adoration the pale, handsome boy knelt

in the church, his dark eyes fixed upon the image of the Virgin, crying with heart and voice,—

'Grant, oh grant that I may be a true musician!'

He heard the joyful peal of the bells, angel voices seemed to join in their harmony, promising fulfilment of his prayer; the child's heart beat faster as he pressed closer and closer to the image.

Suddenly a dull, cracking sound was heard, followed by a cry of terror, and a heavy beam fell from the belfry into the church, close to the kneeling boy, who sank fainting to the ground. He was carried to his father's house, where his parents wept and lamented, thinking him dead. But he suddenly opened his eyes smiled an indescribably happy smile, and said,—

'Did you see how the Madonna preserved me from death? Her blue mantle detached itself from the picture and floated round my shoulders! That is a sign that she has heard my prayer. Have patience with me, I shall become a good musician.'

Grétry had reached his eighteenth year, and his talent had gained him many friends, when he crossed the Alps, and entered beautiful Italy, the land of song, where the flower of his genius gradually unfolded itself. Rome became his second home, Casali instructed him in composition, and Grétry laboured unceasingly, his celebrated master introducing him into musical circles, where his irresistibly amiable qualities soon won all hearts.

More than one lovely woman endeavoured to make a captive of the interesting stranger, but his lightheartedness, his pure mind, and a certain fickleness of disposition preserved him from all the snares and dangers which threatened his youth and his whole

future. A pair of lovely eyes sometimes attracted the excitable youth, he would occasionally kiss some roguish red lips, but all this rather resembled the fluttering of a butterfly; his life was too restless to admit of any deep attachment taking root within him. At this romantic period of his life he produced his first remarkable compositions, two lovely intermezzos, which delighted musicians and non-musicians alike. His wildly-beating heart was now powerfully attracted to Paris, that gayest of cities, which he had chosen for the scene of his labours. He bade farewell to "bella Italia,' and in company with a French artist travelled through Switzerland to Strasburg, where we find him in the full enjoyment of the loveliest of spring landscapes.

He enjoyed the beautiful day at his leisure, and did not hasten his solitary walk. Now he threw himself down under a blossoming tree, and, after the manner of foolish people, gazed smilingly up into the blue heavens, now he shaded his eyes with his hand and gazed into the far distance; and now he stooped to take a reverse view of the sky. He nodded to all the church-goers, and ceased not to sing and whistle to himself. His mind much resembled an Æolian harp, every breath, every thought calling forth melody.

His meditations were interrupted by a rustling noise and the sound of hasty footsteps, 'light as fairy's tread.' A young girl ran past him, eagerly pursuing a gaily-coloured butterfly of remarkable beauty. She seemed scarcely fifteen years of age, her form was that of the child rather than the maiden. A short white dress fluttered round the tiniest of feet, her round straw hat had fallen off, but hung from her neck by a blue ribbon, dark brown hair hung in heavy tresses over

her shoulders, and she wore at her breast a bunch of violets. Her lovely face glowed, her eyes glittered with excitement, and she shouted with joy as she drew nearer to the fluttering insect; she ran, nay, almost flew, in pursuit when his flight became more rapid. She had scarcely glanced at our young wanderer; but he gazed after her, thinking that he had never beheld a being so fascinating. His feet, his eyes, even his heart unconsciously followed her footsteps. He suddenly uttered a cry of terror, for the girl had fallen. In a moment he was at her side, and found her kneeling on the ground; she had injured her left foot and was unable to walk or even to rise without assistance, yet she showed no pain, no vexation. When she raised her head towards her unexpected protector her eyes were as full of joy as if unbounded happiness had fallen to her lot.

'I have caught him, the rogue!' was her joyful cry, as she held up her right hand, the fingers of which were closed. At the same instant, however, an acute pain in the foot caused the delicate fingers to relax their hold, the insect pressed through, flew away, and was free! The young man attempted, by the aid of his broad-brimmed hat, to recapture the fugitive, but was detained by his fair companion.

'Let him go; he would not stay with me any longer, and I do not want him! he was mine for a moment, and I am satisfied.'

'Pray get up, your foot is *malade!*' said Grétry.

He spoke slowly and in broken German, but his lovely companion understood him, leaned upon his arm, and moved slowly onwards, pointing to a neighbouring village as the place of her abode.

'What is the name of the village where you live?'

'Sesenheim.'

'And what is your name?'

'Frederike.'

'How near Sesenheim seems! Let us walk slowly, or rather let us rest, that your foot may get well.'

They seated themselves upon the grass under a large beech tree, whose leaves had just issued from their buds. The sunshine fell through the trembling branches upon the youthful pair; they were so good, so beautiful, who would not have predicted for them a future as bright as the spring morning in whose gentle charms they were delighting? They conversed as freely as children, as unreservedly as though they had been many years acquainted. Grétry informed his companion that he was a musician, that he was traveling to Paris, and had just left the glorious Swiss country and entered Strasbourg. With all the enthusiasm of youth, he described his happy life of liberty, and talked of his ambitious schemes, notwithstanding the difficulty he felt in pronouncing the strange German words. Frederike, on her part, showed him the red roof of the parsonage where she was born, asked questions about the Swiss mountains, respecting which she had read much, and about the red-cheeked Swiss girls, with their clear voices and merry Jodel-songs. He well knew how to describe all this clearly and in a pleasing manner, although his companion often indulged in a hearty laugh at his expressions and strange construction of sentences. The Jodel-songs were very successful, he was acquainted with many of them, had learned the correct pronunciation, and sang them charmingly in his sweet tenor voice. Frederike was especially delighted with the following:—

'Uf'm Bergli bin i gesässe,
Ha de Vögle zugeschaut;
Hänt gesunge, hänt gesprunge,
Hänt's Nästli gebaut.

In ä Garte bin i gestande
Ha de Imbli zugeschaut;
Hänt gebrummet, hänt gesummet,
Hänt Zelli gebaut.

Uf d' Wiese bin i gange,
Lugt' i Summervögle a;
Hänt gesoge, hänt gefloge,
Gar z'schön hänt's gethan.

Und da kummt nu de Hänsel
Und da zeig' i em froh,
Wie sie's mache, und mer lache
Und mache's au so.'

The birds sang around them, the bees hummed and fell into the grass, bewildered by the pleasures of spring, the air was soft and pleasant. The maiden smiled at André, who seemed lost in a sea of happiness. Frederike tried to sing the melody; he helped her, for her voice was sweet and musical; they laughed and joked over their task, until at last the song was learnt.

'That will remind me of you,' said Frederike, as she rose from the ground. 'I must go home now, my foot is quite well.'

'Oh, wait one moment! who knows if we shall ever meet again?' he entreated, so earnestly that she once more seated herself.

'I hope I shall soon hear of a certain Grétry who composes all kinds of beautiful music, and who is known and honoured by all Paris, all France, or by

the whole world! And I shall think, "That is the merry singer, who sat by my side under the beech-tree and taught me the pretty song."'

'And some day I shall compose a great opera, which will be performed in Paris, and the audience will shout "bravo"; but in the midst of their shouting a hand will throw me a bouquet, a bouquet of *violettes*. I shall look around me, and in the nearest box I shall see a lovely woman, who is on her wedding tour. She has brown hair and black eyes, she smiles and waves her hand, and her *cher mari* smiles. Who is it? The young German girl from Sesenheim!'

'Oh, that would be splendid! yes, I should like to show you the man I could love, and love dearly; he would be glittering and handsome, finer than the butterfly which I caught to-day.'

'But what if he should fly away like your prisoner, leaving pain behind him?

'He would still have been mine for a moment, then all would be well. I will bear the pain!'

A pause followed. Frederike absently pulled to pieces her bouquet of violets; her head was slightly raised, her eyes, beautiful as those of a deer, gazed into the far distance. Grétry ever treasured up within his heart this lovely picture.

He drew out his writing-tablets, pushed the pencil into his companion's hand and said,—

'Write me your dear name and the date, in return for the song!'

She did so.

'Now give me the half-destroyed bouquet!'

She smiled as she fulfilled this second request, rose from the ground, and held out her hand to Grétry.

The thoughtless, happy youth felt deep emotion for the first time in his life, and watched the maiden as she followed the narrow path leading to the village. Her step was light and joyous, and she often glanced back, waving her hand and singing, in a voice clear as that of the lark, the Swiss melody,—

'Uf 'm Bergli bin i gesässe.'

When at length she disappeared behind the hedges the young man's grief was as deep as though he had seen her borne away in her coffin; heavy, anxious sorrow seemed to fall upon him like a mountain, and André Grétry, who since his childhood had not shed one tear of pain, now covered his eyes with his hands and wept bitterly.

Twenty years later, André Modeste Grétry was in the full glory of his fame as a composer. France had chosen him for her favourite, and his native Belgium was proud to call him her son. His operas, 'L'Hurone,' 'Le Tableau Parlant,' 'Lucille,' 'Zemire et Azor,' 'La Caravane,' and foremost among favourites, 'Richard Cœur de Lion,' were not celebrated on the French stage alone, Germany, too, crowned the composer with laurels. Grétry's chief object was true and correct melody, he endeavoured in song to copy the language of daily life, the accompaniment was merely accessory, and Grétry was a decided enemy to all orchestral embellishments. His melodies were lively and attractive as their composer, and the existence of over forty operas proves that the source from which he drew was inexhaustible. Grétry's melodies, rather than those of any other composer, have become the property of the

French nation, and thus they will remain for all time. Amid the greatest events which passed around her, France has not forgotten her favourite. When the great Emperor Napoleon commenced his retreat from Russia, when in dumb and terrible agony he gazed upon the small remaining portion of his faithful army, the old guard struck up Grétry's song,—

'Où peut-on être mieux
Qu' au sein de sa famille.'

And when the mighty hero fled from Elba, and once more trod the soil of his empire, he was received with fanatical enthusiasm, and welcomed by Grétry's melodies.

'Veillons au salut de l'Empire !'

shouted the sons of France as they welcomed their emperor. When at length the fettered Prometheus, tormented by a thousand pangs, stood upon the shores of St. Helena, countless lips sang softly, and in accents of most bitter sorrow, the touching lament of faithful Blondel,—

'Oh Richard, oh mon roi,
L'univers t'abandonne !'

On the 24th September, 1813, the sweet, melodious dream of Grétry's life was ended. Happy in the circle of his friends, honoured and beloved by his contemporaries, the last storms of the revolution could only drive a few dark clouds over the sky of his existence.

In accordance with the last wishes of the deceased, several keepsakes, dating from the happiest periods of his life, were placed in his coffin. Among them lay

some small old writing-tablets, one of them bearing the inscription, 'Frederike Brion, Sesenheim, May, 12th, 1767;' also a few violets, which time had converted into dust.

And the lovely girl who had left in the heart of the musician an impression which time could not remove, were her dreams as soft and peaceful?

The fate of Frederike is known to the world. The gaudy butterfly which she had declared herself so desirous of possessing, if only for a moment, flew to her heart;—Wolfgang Goethe entered the quiet Sesenheim parsonage. The Swiss melody taught her by the young musician was among the songs which Frederike sang to Goethe; it afterwards found a place among his poems, with the simple note, 'Communicated.' What a history lies concealed in that single word!

For the space of one short happy summer, Frederike called the glorious one her own; then he left her *for ever!* Her boundless sorrow could not draw from her one complaint, she pressed her hand to her heart and said, 'It pains me not!'

But that heart broke with the effort, her life was passed in solitude and silent grief, and she often said, 'She whom Goethe has once loved can never again be loved by man.'

THE CONVENT OF S. LUCIA.

It was the Feast of the Ascension, in the year 1794, the bells were ringing for morning prayer, and crowds

of pious worshippers were on their way to the beautiful convent of S. Lucia, not far from Rome. The beauty of the scene was enhanced by the picturesque costumes of the pilgrims—the lovely women, adorned with flowers and wearing white veils, the tall handsome men, with their little branches of sweet-scented orange blossom. The light of spring and the joy of life seemed reflected in all eyes, the glowing sun lovingly kissed those brown, warm-hued cheeks, and his beams tenderly embraced those powerful well-built forms.

The windows of the little church were bathed in light; but within the building clouds of incense were rising, and the dim light of the consecrated tapers could scarcely penetrate the gloom. Soft twilight reigned, and the image of S. Lucia appeared like a queen of spring, adorned with the most splendid flowers and garlands. The priest stretched forth his arms in benediction, the faithful worshippers fell upon their knees, and the 'Kyrie Eleison' of the pious nuns sounded from the grated choir. How glorious, how elevating was Palestrina's solemn music sung by those soft, sweet voices. The well-sustained melody flowed clear and strong through the tumult of voices which mingled with one another, vainly seeking to cover and conceal it. The mighty one was ever victorious, forcing them to humiliating retreat, until at length all united in one glorious harmony. The trembling souls of the listeners now rose exulting to the highest heaven, now, as if drawn by lovely invisible chains of flowers, they sank back, softly weeping, to the beloved earth.

The worshippers were drawn from their sweet

reveries by the sound of a soprano voice which was heard for the first time in the 'Gloria.' The tones were of piercing clearness, almost cutting in their purity, overpowering in their fulness. The voice did not resemble those of the other singers, it could not mingle with them; its solitary tones, full and clear, but free from melting softness, rose and fell within the church. The wonderful voice was not heard in the 'Credo,' its place was supplied by another and softer soprano; but in the 'Agnus Dei' and the 'Dona Nobis Pacem' it again pierced through the thick clouds of incense like a sharp, glittering, victorious spear. No excitement trembled in that voice, no youthful joy shone forth in those tones, it was a voice which belonged to no age, to no sex, it seemed as though it had been thus and must remain thus for ever.

The crowd was greatly excited. 'Holy Maria!' murmured an aged dame, 'that was not the voice of a woman!' And she crossed herself, praying vehemently in a low voice. Her startled, dark-haired neighbour nodded approval, and in a whisper communicated the exclamation to a man who knelt by her side, and whose fiery eyes in vain endeavoured to penetrate the grating of the choir. The mass was ended, the women left the church in deep agitation, the men shook their heads; all spoke of the wonderful voice, but none knew the name of the mysterious singer. The tapers were extinguished, and the thousand questions, doubts, fears, and expectations were swallowed up in the busy life of an Italian spring day.

When, the next morning, the smiling, beaming Italian sun gazed lovingly into the little church, he

was surprised to find an expectant crowd already assembled, every countenance bearing an expression of eager anticipation, and being turned towards the choir. Again the mysterious voice rang forth, again the listeners wondered, again their hearts trembled in fear and joy. A young, lovely woman glowed and shook with excitement as she cried, 'Holy Queen of Heaven, I see the marvel! Maria help us! it is a singing child!' And the worshippers could distinguish behind the grating the slight form of a child about ten years of age, from whose lips the wondrous sounds flowed forth. The child's features were strictly regular, but seemed as if unendowed with life, and the youthful cheeks were of transparent paleness.

The excitement of the populace grew stronger hour by hour after this discovery. Day after day great crowds were drawn to the convent to hear the mysterious little singer, whose voice could be plainly distinguished even in the full chorus. The news of mighty tones proceeding from the lips of a child spread through the surrounding country, reaching even to Rome, and the crowds which attended mass at the convent grew ever greater.

The believers who, without doubts and disputings, thankfully received the supposed miracle, were few in number compared with those whose hearts and minds, filled with a thousand suspicions and conjectures respecting the singer, swayed restlessly hither and thither.

'It is a convent boarder who sings, so they say at the convent,' remarked some.

'But at any rate she must be deformed; she is certainly eighteen or nineteen years of age, and perhaps

the form of a child was given her in punishment for her crimes. No *child* could sing thus!'

'No, no!' cried others; 'you have been deceived; we know for certain that it was Sister Barbara, one of the younger nuns, who sang; the child did but listen in silence.

'Never!' interrupted a few women. 'It is a miracle; S. Lucia has sent an angel from heaven to the pious Abbess Theresa.'

'What nonsense are you talking?' cried a powerful man, with a resolute and intelligent expression of countenance. 'The whole affair is a shameful cheat; we are being deceived and the silver coins are being tempted out of our pockets!' The people crowded round him in feverish haste, and the speaker continued, 'Yes, listen to me, the truth of my words will soon be as clear to you as the day. Give me your attention, I have but a few words to speak. The convent is poor, S. Lucia is in need of a new velvet robe and golden hangings, rich alms are required, and means have been thought of to attract the credulous. A machine has been constructed in Rome, a singing wax doll moved by clock-work. I tell you it is no child and no nun who sings in that loud, strange voice; it is simply a marionette!'

The excited listeners started, shuddered, crossed themselves, grew fanatical, and at length believed.

'By S. Giovanni, Matteo is right!' cried a wild-looking Hercules, clenching his fist. 'The singing is priest-craft and nothing more. Who ever heard of a singing child, a child with such power? Be no longer deceived, the wonderful singer is nothing but a wax-coated wooden doll. I have more than once

seen such curious figures at the house of an old professor in Rome.'

'Yes, it is no wonder that we all felt cold shudders as we listened to the clear, flute-like tones; it was a warning against the hellish deceit!' added another, his eyes fiery with excitement.

'This shameful affair is a disgrace to the church of S. Lucia! We may not suffer the deception to be carried on, but must unveil and destroy it; all the saints will help us in a work such as this!' stormed a third.

The crowd surged in highest agitation. The women gazed in terror at one another as they described the rigid waxen features and glassy eyes of the marionette, and declared they had not understood a syllable of the sacred anthems it had sung; many had even remarked a strange buzzing noise at the close of the 'Gloria.' 'The clockwork had run down!' they whispered. The men grew more and more excited by their own violent speeches, and even the most gentle among the women were roused by the flaming glances of their husbands, brothers, or lovers. It was determined that the whole band should repair to the convent, and demand that the deceiving marionette should be delivered up.

Evening was drawing near when the noisy crowd set forth on its way to the quiet convent, and, thundering at the ivy-covered gates, angrily demanded admission. The alarmed prioress commanded the doors to be thrown open, and met the besiegers on the threshold, while the nuns fled to their cells, uttering cries of terror. The noble countenance of the pious prioress, her tall, imposing form, and the crucifix which she held before her, were not without influence

on the mob; the wild cries were hushed, and a few women fell on their knees. The men drew back, and one spokesman respectfully approached the prioress, explaining to her the wishes, suspicions, and demands of his companions. Surprise and incredulity were visible in the countenance of the prioress.

'Is it possible, my children,' she cried, 'that you could suspect your Mother Theresa of such deceit? Is it possible that you could debase yourselves and grieve me by so unworthy a suspicion? Depart, repent, and confess your sins, for the voice which has led you into so deplorable an error, the voice by which your hearts were so wonderfully moved, came from the lips of a child who is being educated in the convent, from the lips of a girl ten years of age, a native of Sinigaglia.'

'We will see the child!' cried a few wild voices, whose sound again roused the fierce passions of the crowd.

'Yes, yes, we will see the witch! we will hear her speak! we will touch her hands and face and feel her warm breath!'

The countenances grew more threatening, the shouts more confused. The remonstrances of the prioress were unheeded, and the once peaceful court-yard re-echoed with the sound of rough voices.

Then Mother Theresa disappeared, but soon returned, leading a pale, trembling girl, whom she pushed towards the restless crowd. The child's regular, colourless features seemed as if formed of wax; her hair was black in colour and her dark eyes gazed in terror at the wild, fierce countenances by which she was surrounded.

'Fear not, Angelica,' said the prioress, softly; 'be

brave, help your Mother Theresa, and convince this deluded multitude. Lift up your voice and praise the Queen of Heaven.'

Angelica began a simple old 'Salve Regina,' but with such power, clearness, and devotion, so calmly, that the breathless listeners involuntarily bowed their knees. Such deep peace, such unsullied innocence as spoke in those tones could only flow from the lips of one who had not yet experienced life's roses and thorns, its sweet sorrows and bitter joys. The crystal-clear tones poured forth far, far into the beautiful twilight, into the peaceful country. The rays of the new moon fell softly upon the heads of the crowd, upon the forehead of the youthful singer, and upon the grave countenance of the prioress. As Angelica concluded, the men and women raised themselves from their knees, and with the sincere and overpowering enthusiasm which is the birthright of the southern nations hurried towards the singer. They sobbingly kissed the hands of the smiling child, her cheeks, her feet, the hem of her garment, praised her while tears ran down their cheeks, called down blessings upon her, and at last a mighty shout, 'Evviva Angelica Catalani!' rang through the air.

Mother Theresa soon sent away from her convent the wonderful child-singer, she could not forget the manner in which the peace of her quiet retreat had been violated; but she doubtless had cause to repent of her imprudence, for the world knows that little Angelica soon became the great Catalani;—Europe knelt before her. What gifts of splendid garments, jewels, and glittering coronets might not have fallen to the share of S. Lucia?

MARIA.

THE charming neighbourhood of —— was arrayed in the full splendour of a May evening in southern Europe. The smiling landscape rejoiced in the alternate embraces of the luxuriant spring, and the mildest of evenings. Not far from the romantic town stood a country house, destined to be for some weeks the residence of a Spanish family; the mansion was surrounded by a blooming garden.

'A garden in Italy.' Our northern imaginations are pleasurably excited by the very sound of the words; we hear the rustling of pine-trees, cypresses cast their shadowy veils over bright flowers, to soften their burning colours, lemon and orange trees sportively drop their beautiful blossoms on the ground, while the tall laurel solemnly observes their play, and the lovely myrtle longingly stretches out her tender arms towards him, silvery stars glittering among her dark leaves. The voices of innumerable birds enliven this earthly paradise, and gaily-coloured butterflies flutter from flower to flower, free and unfettered as thoughts of love.

In this garden, which was illumined by the rays of the moon—in those fortunate lands a silver sun—played a child, frail and of fairy-like loveliness. Six summers had kissed that clear forehead, but the lovely countenance bore an expression of thoughtfulness unusual in one so young, and the light of a noble mind shone in those great eyes.

The child's tiny hands collected a heap of blossoms; she buried her head in that scented pillow, rested

quietly awhile, and seemed to dream; she then resumed her occupation, and seemed never to tire of her pleasant play. She listened almost breathlessly as the butterflies drew near, longing to taste of those young lips, fresh as the proudest rose. The little birds, too, seemed to know the lovely child, for they hopped around her, boldly pulling her long brown curls. And the child suffered them, she could not even drive away the thirsty gnat, which, with a hum of delight, plunged its sting into her plump, white arm. Birds and flowers, beetles and butterflies, the gay-coloured fly and the impudent gnat were the child's playfellows. She had no sister then, and her parents were too grave to toy with the dreamy little fairy. The ever-beautiful world of flowers, free, luxuriant nature, was the wise and much-loved instructress of the intelligent child.

As the last sighs of the hot daylight died away, and night drew near with silent footsteps, to breathe upon the flowers with her sweet, cool breath, and to drop tears upon the drooping leaves, a wondrously sweet melody arose from among the thick foliage of a lemon tree. The singer was a nightingale, in its simple grey feather dress.

Oh, it is well for us that we know this sweet little singer! The nightingale is a ray of light from the glowing south, which God's loving hand has cast into our northern spring. Who can talk of a nightingale and not imagine himself by the side of a retired, gently-murmuring stream, shaded by drooping willows which longingly plunge their long green fingers into the cool waters? The moonbeams tremble through the branches, and the nightingale's wondrous song

through the air. The most stony heart is softened, and thirstily drinks in the silvery tones; they are a balsam for every wound, they enhance every pleasure, they bring sweet melancholy and delightful longings to the happy ones of earth, dreams of heaven to the unhappy beings in whom hope and joy are dead.

The child trembled with delight as she listened to tones so new to her, the bird sang on and on, the listener's whole soul was filled with the melodies, and soared with them far, far away, high above the earth.

Deep silence reigned around, birds and flowers blissfully drank in the sweet drops of melody. Do you know why the nightingale, rather than the other birds, has received that wondrous voice? The history of the nightingale's song was related to me by the bird's lover, a slender, charming rose elf:—

'The nightingale once struck her wings and her tiny breast against the great Creator's mighty golden harp, which stood in His glorious Paradise. The chords murmured, the eternal harmonies were awakened, they streamed and surged around the fragile creature, who derived from them her heavenly voice. But the priceless gift brought no blessing, for the Creator punished the inquisitive bird, and with the voice death entered into her breast. She was compelled to sing on and on, but her frail body could not bear the mighty volume of sound, the powerful melodies, and so she perished suddenly, in the flower of her life, in the midst of her loveliest song. The treasure has been inherited by nightingales throughout all ages, but all have sung and perished like this first singer of Paradise.

But the Almighty, in His infinite mercy, has appointed a consolation for the race which He has visited with His displeasure. The nightingale may bestow her dangerous, ill-gotten treasure upon a pure, guiltless child of man, and can then live in undisturbed freedom, rejoicing in her life, for death is the inseparable companion of the wonderful gift. 'The birds, however, seldom give away their voice,' added the elf, jestingly, 'for the cunning creatures are well aware that *we* love the *singing* nightingales alone; they therefore prefer a brief but delightful life of love to a long tuneless, joyless existence.'

With these words the charming narrator, somewhat fatigued, disappeared within a half-expanded moss-rose.

The child knew nothing of this history, but the magic power of the nightingale's song was felt by the young heart, which beat high with delight. Forebodings which, as yet, she could not comprehend, visions and desires which the half-awakened mind was powerless to understand streamed upon the listener; the little hands were folded in unconscious prayer, sweet tears escaped from the glittering eyes.

'Oh! if I could but be a song-bird such as that!' sighed the child, softly.

The heart-stirring tones grew more powerful, the wondrous song more alluring, the syren of the air drew her net more firmly around those who listened to the entrancing sounds. But then came a sudden silence—a melodious sigh—a terrified fluttering—and the bird fell dying at the feet of the frightened child. The lovely little fairy bent weeping, and greatly surprised, over the expiring bird, and gently laid the

throbbing body of the sufferer upon a bed of scented rose-leaves. A ray of gratitude shone in the half-closed eyes, and the child pityingly rested her blooming cheek against the stiffening body, gently pressing her rosy mouth upon the mightingale's head. A breath touched the child's lips and seemed to penetrate to her very heart, it was a wonderful, sweet, benumbing breath. A strange sensation took possession of her, she closed her eyes and sank upon the grass, while it seemed to her as though the sufferer had suddenly regained its strength, and gaily hastened away, giving utterance to strange sounding chirpings. Then came beauteous forms, strewing flowers over the child and casting wreaths of golden laurel upon her heart. And it seemed that wings had been given her; she began to soar and sing like the wonderful bird which she had kissed, At length the veil of unconsciousness spread itself over the feverishly excited child, and she was still insensible when, after an anxious search, her parents discovered their missing daughter.

Many years had passed since that May night, the icy hand of winter lay upon the warm hearts of earth, and the Italian Opera House at Paris was crowded by the most brilliant audience. The dazzling rays of the chandeliers fell flatteringly upon many a lovely countenance, upon many a snowy neck, saw themselves reflected in beautiful eyes, sparkled boldly among the countless dew-drops of diamonds, rubies, and emeralds which the hand of some munificent fairy seemed to have scattered over the fair flowers assembled. Joyful expectation was manifested in low

murmurs, and as the overture to Rossini's 'Othello' resounded, all eyes, in eager impatience, were turned towards the curtain.

The opera commenced, forms and tones rose up and disappeared, still the assembled crowd waited and listened. At last Desdemona appeared, and one shout of joy rang through the glittering halls of the temple of art, countless flowers and wreaths were thrown upon the stage, the light of pleasure sparkled in every eye, a smile of delight reigned on every countenance.

Whose was that frail, etherial form? whose those pale features? whose that earnest gaze, that entrancing voice, penetrating to every heart like the voice of spring, scattering heavenly delights around? Who was that lovely woman whose song revived the fainting heart, bringing it dreams from the sweet days of long forgotten childhood, from the still sweeter hours of long departed love? It was the child who once played in an Italian garden, the child who had received the nightingale's voice, it was the queen of song, MARIA MALIBRAN GARCIA.

She is gone, our great one; she died as a nightingale must die; the star of her life was extinguished at the time of its brightest radiance. Let us not mourn, hers is the happiest lot, that of the nightingale expiring in the flower of life, we have the sweet remembrance, and a bright, living consolation from our loved one, a singing flower who blossomed under her eyes—her sister Paulina.

THE SYRENS.

'Und kommt dann der mond bei nächtlicher Zeit
Herauf an dem Himmel gezogen.
Da zeigt sich im Wasser im schimmernden Kleid
Mit Blumen und Perlen die schönste Maid.'

COME, you great, grave children, who still love to listen to gay fairy-tales, those luring pictures of sweet dreamland—come with your hearts, so weary of sad reality—come with your sorrowful eyes, and I will tell you of a kingdom whose wondrous power you could never suspect, whose luxuriant beauty, wrapped in veils of glittering brightness, charms the senses and makes the soul to glow with deepest longings and impetuous desires; I will tell you of the water kingdom.

Follow me to the ocean, gaze deep, deep down into this great and glorious eye of earth, this ocean, which can smile so entrancingly and murmur so menacingly. Gaze into it when the joy-beams which the last fiery kiss of the setting sun has kindled, yet glow within it, and then wait in timid reverence until night descends like a beautiful dark-lashed eyelid, gently concealing the glittering eye. Nature's true life of delight begins with night, which conceals the highest raptures; the human heart, cradled in the arms of sleep, forgets its sorrowful existence, and all the grief and pain of the bright daylight the aching eyes forget their tears, all God's creatures enjoy soft repose, and in this repose a new and lovely world is opened to them.

At midnight a moonbeam glides like a gentle warning over the ocean waters, a sweet zephyr passes like a mysterious greeting over the waves, which

then awake, raise their heads, hastily adorn themselves with their glittering crowns of foam, and, strangely intertwining, begin a dance, singing wonderful melodies, full of wild joy and delight. Dull-eyed men call these humid, airy forms 'waves;' but they are charming, alluring women, with glittering eyes and snowy necks. They dive and rise, float hither and thither, cast themselves into the arms of their companions, and melodies which rend our hearts and confuse our understandings flow from their lips. In olden times, when men, inspired by the spirit of poetry, passed through the world with believing eyes and clear minds, it was granted them to hear those blissful songs, and many a sailor, as he crossed the wide seas, has seen those entrancing beings, has listened, shuddering with delight, to their entrancing songs, and has named them Syrens.

'But who are they? who created those charming, mist-like forms?' you will ask. I will tell you, for a delicate lotus-blossom has revealed to me the secret of the Syrens' existence.

When God had created the lovely earth, and all the creatures of His hand gazed up to Him, full of life and joy, two of His most beautiful angels walked over the blooming fields, distributing the Good Father's last gifts—heavenly pearls of sound—bestowing upon every being a sweet voice, wherewith to praise the mighty Creator. The whole air was filled with cries of delight, with shouts of gratitude; the angels shed tears of joy, walked on and on, sweet melodies arising at every step. At last the hands, so rich in blessing, were empty, the last precious pearls had fallen among tiny flowers and upon the tall, blooming grass, and

the Good Father's bright messengers flew back to their heavenly home. When morning dawned, and the mighty Creator bent smiling over His beautiful world, He was greeted by thousands upon thousands of loveliest voices. But no sweet tones, no sound, no melody arose from the glittering waters to praise the Maker of All; the fish, those countless inhabitants of the mighty deep, were dumb, no angel hand had cast the most precious of gifts into the fathomless ocean.

The pitying Creator gently spoke one merciful mighty word of promise, and the waves trembled with joy, while the fish leapt in blissful expectation. When night came, with its silvery moon, strange radiance arose from the ocean, the mute inhabitants of the waters became wonderful, entrancing beings, delightful melodies flowed from their lips.

'The glorious life of sound which is denied them by day—let them enjoy it in the stillness of night!' was God's gracious command.

And so it came to pass. Wonderful, magic power is given to these beings for the space of a few joyful hours; their songs of delight are irresistibly attractive, drawing men nearer and nearer, until at last they are overpowered, and sink down amid waves and melodies, for ever members of that mysterious water-kingdom. Ah! how many a weary one has found rest beneath those waters! how many a youth, rejected by the pride of his beloved, slumbers in the glittering grottos, or amid curious, scented water-flowers, beneath budding trees of coral! A wonderful, happy life is opened to him every night, when arms of dazzling whiteness cling round his neck, entrancing melodies float here and there, blue flowers twine about his head, bright-

winged beings hover around him. Crowns glitter, precious stones glisten, pearl mussels gaze with gentle eyes upon the trembling, delighted dreamer, and a soft whisper is heard, 'Behold, all our joys are thine!' And amidst this magic splendour the troubled heart forgets its sorrowful life on earth, dreams no longer of the eyes of the cold loved one, and, sunk in luxurious joys, longs not for the palms of heaven. But over the true, warm heart of a loving maiden, over the blossoming soul of a child, those beautiful humid forms have no power. If such a victim either through despair and sorrow or dreamily sporting and smiling, falls a sacrifice to the Syrens, an angel descends from the highest heaven, and tenderly bears the wandering soul to the arms of the loving Father.

Such is the life of joy and pleasure in the cool, fathomless deep, for an all-seeing eye reaches to the lowest depths of the glorious sea, a loving Creator showers happiness upon all His creatures. The fish in the silvery rivers, brooks, and lakes hold nightly revels in the form of nymphs with green garlands and clear voices, but the smiling, luring Syrens dwell in the ocean alone.

THE MEMNON STATUE.

'Aus alten Märchen winkt es
Hervor mit weisser Hand;
Da singt es und da klingt es
Von einem Zauberland.'

HEINE.

MANY hundred years ago, a good and wise king reigned in Thebes, the most beautiful town in the

ancient wonder-land of Egypt; he was honoured as a god by the gloomy race over which he reigned, and the gods themselves loved the youthful monarch. Now those whom the gods love they adorn with beauty and many rare gifts, and among the blessings which they showered upon their regal favourite was that most precious possession, a glorious voice.

But notwithstanding the fulness of happiness and love by which the monarch was surrounded, his countenance was shaded as by a veil of heaviness, and burning longings, deep, hidden sorrow, and secret woe dwelt in his songs. When he sang, resting under the shadow of tall palms, and listeners from among his people had respectfully stationed themselves at a little distance, their hearts often trembled in blissful sorrow, and glowing tears stole from their eyes. Sad yet charming legends of sweet flowers which pined away and died in their passionate love for the glittering stars so far above them, and wild, glowing melodies in honour of the mighty, benevolent fire-queen, the sun, flowed from the inspired lips of the royal singer. As evening shades drew near his song ceased, to awaken with the dawn, more glorious, more entrancing. With the last rays of the sun the fire of the king's glance was extinguished, and he passed the night alone, sunk in gloomy reveries.

The people sorrowed with their beloved ruler, but no mortal could discover the cause of his grief. Many lips whispered,—

'The king's heart has succumbed to the fulness of happiness, therefore fear and anxiety for its duration are heard in his songs.'

The priests of Isis and Osiris, however, murmured darkly,—

'The pangs of *love* tremble in the king's song!'

Yet the king had never loved a woman, his hand had never caressed a maiden's flowing curls, his well-formed lips had never kissed a creature of earth. He scarcely glanced at the dark-featured women of his country, still less did he smile upon them; but the priests were right in their surmise. The king loved, but his pure affection rose far, far above our little earth, into the azure vault of heaven; he loved the life-giving goddess, the glowing sun. His pure heart was a fathomless sea of love, in which the lofty object of his affections was reflected, and in mysterious melodies, unintelligible to all who might hear him, he praised the beaming splendour of the bright goddess.

But no mortal may presume, unpunished, to love the mighty gods, and vengeance overtook even the noble sovereign. True, the beautiful queen listened to the youth's imploring song; she bent down and breathed upon him with the warm breath of love; but he could not bear that fiery affection, a love too powerful even for gods, and died like a lotus-blossom stricken by the scorching sunbeams. As his handsome form sank down under her burning embrace, as his eyes were blinded by the radiance of his beloved, the sorrowing goddess softly spoke a magic word, kissed him once again, and with that last kiss the last breath passed from the lips of the youthful monarch, a breath sweet as the scent of roses.

The dawn arose, smilingly proclaiming the advent of the sun; then the news of the king's death reached the ears of his sorrowing subjects, who proceeded to

the palace to see the dead body of their beloved monarch, to weep over it, and by the aid of precious spices and rare herbs to protect it from the threatening demon of corruption. But the palace had disappeared, no trace of it was to be found, and in its stead there arose a gigantic grey statue of their beloved ruler. He sat erect upon a throne, his rigid features turned towards the rising sun. With loud lamentations the astonished people crowded round the strange semblance of their king, and twined garlands of flowers round the cold stone. The priests, however, frowned darkly as they cried:

'Leave him, he is gone from us for ever! Isis has judged him, he has loved the fire-queen!'

At this moment the clouds passed away, and the sun appeared, more glorious, more triumphant than ever before. Her first beams kissed the statue, which began to send forth wondrous, entrancing tones, such as could be compared to no earthly sounds—a blissful loving greeting, a plaintive song, a melodious supplication addressed by the stony monarch to his heavenly love. With glowing eagerness the sun's rays embraced the cold stone, the statue shone brightly, its limbs were bathed in rosy light, the eyes glowed, and seemed to cast fiery glances upon the pigmies standing below. The trembling spectators covered their faces and fell to the ground, but the gloomy shadows faded from the priest's faces as they cried,—

'Praise the mighty goddess, that was the king's voice! Arise, King Memnon still watches over his children!'

The Nile murmurs mysteriously, the ancient land of Egypt lies before our eyes like a long-forgotten mummy, the proud races which once wandered over

that ground have disappeared, and with them priceless treasures of genius. The beautiful city of Thebes is destroyed, but among the fallen columns and ruins of by-gone glories stands, in proud solitude, a gigantic statue which still bears the name of Memnon. At night, when the ancient glories of Egypt awake, when flowers whisper strange legends, and the mocking stars send down fiery kisses upon the lovely narrators, the tall statue alone stands silent and grim amid the entrancing scents and sounds. But when the ghostly splendours fade before the dawn, when the sun reveals her beaming countenance, the statue of the ancient king seems endowed with life, the stone trembles, and with the first touch of the loving sunbeams sends forth tones of entrancing sweetness, which are at length hushed by the sun's fiery embrace.

Solitary travellers, who, in timid reverence, visited the ancient, mysterious land, listened with loudly beating hearts and shudders of delight to the magic greeting of the dead monarch, and their glowing descriptions have made many a young heart to burn with the desire to travel far, far away to the most majestic solitude on earth, to the ruins of Thebes, to the tuneful statue of King Memnon.

THE ANGEL'S VOICE.

'Si Deus pro nobis, quis contra nos?'
HANDEL'S 'MESSIAH.'— *No.* 51.

SPRING had once more returned to our lovely earth, flowers and men's hearts smiled as they awoke from

slumber, new, happy life floated in the breeze, and the golden sun illumined the deep blue vault of heaven. A tall, grave man paced thoughtfully along the walks of a little garden, the light-winged, invisible spirits of spring fluttered about him, rosy zephyrs played around his kingly head, and cast white cherry-blossoms against his handsome countenance. The tall, powerful form of the thoughtful one was indescribably noble, and those who saw him would have involuntarily bowed low before him, forcibly reminded of the heroes of by-gone ages, the wise and mighty rulers of nations which have long since passed away. Holy peace rested upon that noble forehead, bright animation sparkled in those great eyes; but deep sorrow had settled around the well-formed mouth, a sorrow which the sweetest smiles of the young spring could not chase away. He slowly ascended a grassy mound, upon whose summit stood a budding apple-tree, covered as if by a veil of purple blossom, and lost himself in earnest comtemplation of the beautiful landscape. Not far from the garden were seen the smoking chimneys and glittering roofs of a large, pleasant town, surrounded by green meadows and fertile gardens—it was Dublin, the capital of Ireland. The landscape was bounded by lofty and blue mountains, far away in the distant horizon.

'Oh, thou verdant, child-like Ireland!' cried the solitary wanderer, stretching out his arms in highest agitation—'oh, thou gentle, peaceful country, full of meekness, full of faith and contentedness, wilt thou understand one who comes to thee so hopefully? Wilt thou listen attentively and joyfully to the sacred message which I will proclaim in solemn tones—to the

tidings of the birth of the Heavenly Child? Will thy heart bow in lowly adoration with the shepherds of Judea? wilt thou with them believe the holy tidings and join in the praises of the heavenly host? England, with its cold, busy hearts, rejected the revelation, of the Lord and the wonders of the sacred books, will thy people be more ready to receive them? I felt mightily drawn to thee, my Ireland, when I had proclaimed my sacred message to the empty aisles of the most beautiful London church, when the crowded, worldly city despised me, and refused to hear. I then thought that in thy green valleys alone could I forget the griefs by which I was assailed. A low but unspeakably sweet voice whispered to me one sleepless night, "Arise, and journey to Ireland! Be brave, pious singer, for thou shalt conquer, and thy victory shall be but the first link in a chain of endless triumphs!" I obeyed the wonderful voice, I fled from gloomy London, and now I am here. Has the mysterious voice spoken truth? Will the beaming sun of triumph at last rise for me, after the ceaseless battles and struggles of my restless life? Oh, Lord of all creation, Whose praises I proclaim, Whose servant I have at length become, after many wanderings, grant me a glorious victory, and strengthen me thereby, for I am very weary! My native Germany despises and rejects me, my foes are many in number, and I am disheartened and cast down, my arm is weary of the strife. Wilt Thou not fight for me, oh my God?'

A strange rustling was heard in all the branches, the rays of the sun grew more dazzling, all the flowers bent their heads, and the air was so sweet, so pure

that the speaker blissfully closed his eyes and covered his face with his hands; peaceful visions seemed to fall upon him. Hasty steps were now heard approaching from the garden, and an ugly little man dressed in black clothes climbed up the mound, panting in bad English,—

'Master Handel, most honoured music director, where are you? I have spent two hours searching for you in every corner of your house, and have been to all your friends. I ran so fast that I've hardly any breath left, and there you sit dreaming! There is no time for that, I can tell you,' he continued, with an important air, gesticulating wildly with his thin arms, and violently shaking his repulsive head and crooked little wig. 'I have bad news for you: Signora Lucia, the celebrated *prima donna*, is ill, so the performance of your oratorio, which was fixed for to-morrow, will come to nothing. Shall I run and tell the musicians and singers that their services will not be required, and then——'

Handel rose majestically, but with all the fury of a wounded lion.

'The performance of my oratorio come to nothing!' he thundered, casting upon the dwarfish figure of his tormentor a look before which the little man involuntarily retreated several paces, 'who dares to say so? Come to nothing, indeed! and all because of the evil temper of an Italian *prima donna!* Are there not good voices enough in musical Dublin, sweeter, more innocent voices, which will replace to advantage this glittering humming-bird? As sure as I am Handel, I will not abandon my purpose. The performance of the oratorio will certainly take place to-morrow evening, and now—go!'

'By St. Patrick! that wild German musician is worse than the fiercest Englishman, one might run away from him! Well, I shouldn't care to live in the land of bears where he was born, as sure as I'm O'Reilly, an orchestra attendant!'

Thus grumbled the little man, as cautiously and at a respectful distance, he followed Handel from the garden.

The warm, inquisitive rays of the May sun vainly endeavoured to penetrate through the closely drawn red curtains of the charming room occupied by the celebrated Signora Lucia, at once the belle and the favourite of the distinguished Dublin circles. The large apartment was luxuriously furnished; gold and silver vases filled with rare flowers stood in every available corner, marble basins filled with scented waters diffused agreeable coolness, while the splendour and indescribable softness of the carpets, chairs, and sofas betrayed Italian luxury and love of ease. The Signora, attired in a loose white robe, lay upon a couch covered with crimson velvet, a picture of *dolce far, niente,* a costly veil was picturesquely draped around her head, but a few curls of black hair escaped from their confinement. She was conversing with several friend and fellow-artistes, men of varying ages and the representatives of various nations. Here sat a rich, pale-faced English lord, ridiculously attired in the extreme of fashion, his long legs dangling over the back of his seat; here a slight, excitable Frenchman moved uneasily in his chair; by his side a handsome, dark-featured Italian stood humming an air. The remaining guests were a few Irish gentlemen of rank,

and the *primo tenore* and *primo basso* of the theatre. The Signora laughed and talked with each in turn. The frequent use of paint which her profession rendered necessary had given to her cheeks a greyish yellow tinge; but the unpleasant effect was amply atoned for by her full red lips, and the rosy light which penetrated through the crimson curtains cast a soft deceptive glow upon all around. Not the slightest trace of illness could be seen in the Signora's black eyes; they were neither languid nor feverishly excited, their glance was lively and roguish as ever.

'How furious he will be, il barbaro tedesco!' she cried, in broken English, to a young and remarkably handsome Irishman who sat at her feet. 'Now his horribly difficult oratorio cannot be performed; how glad I am! And it shall never be performed with my assistance; I made that resolution when I had sung the first three bars of the great aria, with the dreadful Latin words, "Redemtor meus vivit," which was the first I studied with the Maëstro. He was ungallant enough in the rehearsals to order me to sing piously, adding that there was no holiness in my voice! I would not be insulted by him with impunity—no indeed! I fell ill, dangerously so, and so you see me now!' she concluded, with a smile.

Many flattering remarks followed this speech; all the listeners admired the propriety of her conduct towards the proud German musician, every one knew some fresh anecdote of his severity and arrogance, and no exaggeration was spared in the endeavour to draw an approving smile from Signora Lucia.

'I must confess, however, that I am secretly afraid of him,' said the beautiful Lucia, at last; 'there is

something strangely overpowering in his manner, and I cannot resist his gaze; I trembled with fright when he touched my arm with his bâton. Santa Madre! if he should come to reproach me, I believe I should faint with terror.'

'Charming Signora!' cried the chorus of flatterers, 'you forget that your faithful knights are assembled round you, ready to sacrifice life and fortune for one glance of your eyes!'

Lucia smiled, waved her hand graciously, and continued,—

'I often think of a story related to me by my mother, who was an intimate friend of Cuzzoni, a favourite singer about nineteen years ago. Well, at that time Handel still composed operas, which I am sure were worth a thousand of his new oratorios, and the celebrated Cuzzoni, then in all the triumph of her brilliant London career, was to sing in "Nero" or "Mucius Scevola." At the rehearsal she could not sing the stiff, tiresome melody of the first aria, and in a fit of desperate impatience she threw the music upon the ground and stamped upon it with her little feet, crying, "Barbaro, I will never sing it!" The furious Maëstro sprang towards her, seized her slight form in his gigantic arms, lifted her like a child, and held her out of the open window, far above the ground. "Will you sing your part?" he inquired. The trembling girl, seized with deadly faintness, swore by all the saints that she would do his pleasure, and earnestly entreated him to spare her young life. Handel yielded, and Cuzzoni kept her promise and sang.'

The listeners had scarcely time to express their surprise and indignation, for the Signora's neat

little cameriera rushed in pale with fright, and crying,—

'Santa Virgine!—il Maëstro!'

Lucia shuddered.

'Away with you, he must not find me in your company!' was her terrified cry to her alarmed friends. 'Quick, quick, pass into the next room! If I should require your assistance, the sound of my silver hand-bell will summon you.'

Her beautiful hand hastily raised a curtain at the back of her couch, her admirers made not the slightest resistance, but immediately disappeared behind it, and the heavy gold fringe was still trembling in the current of air caused by their abrupt exit, when the door flew open, and Handel entered the room.

The Signora had languidly thrown herself back and closed her eyes; she remained in that position for the space of a few moments, but as Handel's heavy step was heard approaching, and the light, costly ornaments which stood on the marble table before her began to tremble and shake at the sound, she raised herself with well-feigned surprise, and in a faint voice inquired who dared to disturb her repose.

'Madam,' said Handel, in a loud and earnest voice, whose tones struck to the heart of the secretly terrified dissembler, 'please to remember that you are not now on the stage! You need not give yourself any trouble on my account, for I really did not come to see you act a comedy, but only to fetch the part you were to sing in my oratorio. Where is the music? Give it me back, and quickly, for I have not a moment to lose. I will only remark that your illness causes me no annoyance; I never could endure your Italian

cooing, which is fit for the stage and not for the church, and might perhaps have spoiled my solemn work.'

A burning flush of anger coloured the Signora's cheek; she forgot her part, sprang up and cried furiously,—

'Sir, I will not be insulted in my own house by a stranger!' She seized the little hand-bell and rang it violently. Handel stood before her in undisturbed dignity, and repeated firmly,—

'I ask for your music, nothing more. Give it to me, and then you may be ill again as long as you feel inclined!'

An awkward pause followed.

'Your courageous, invisible friends hesitate to come to your assistance!' said Handel at last, a cloud of displeasure passing over his noble features; 'I suppose I must summon them myself.'

He stepped forward, and before the alarmed Signora could prevent him had raised the curtain behind the couch. He now smiled ironically as he contemplated the group of embarrassed men, some of whom made a feeble attempt to greet him. Lucia, almost beside herself with shame, tore a roll of music from the piano and threw it upon the table. Handel deigned not to honour the singer with a look, far less with a word; he silently seized the roll and left the room.

Late in the evening of the same day, Meister George Handel again paced wearily along the walks of his garden, his head and heart filled with heavy thoughts and anxious cares. The whole afternoon had been passed in fruitless search for a singer who could, on the morrow, take the soprano part in his oratorio, 'The

Messiah.' He had found no one; illness, resentment, ill-humour, or want of musicial talent met him at every door at which he had knocked so hopefully, and now he was weary and exhausted, unspeakably sorrowful, and depressed in spirit. Oh! how his soul had longed for the success of his oratorio in the Irish capital! Three times had the performance been hindered and prevented by various intrigues, and now, at last, after the most stupendous efforts, after the most careful preparations, Handel had thought himself on the verge of success. The coldness and indifference with which London had received 'The Messiah' had driven the creator of that most glorious work away from that crowded, busy city; bowed down with grief he fled to Ireland, hoping to find there a more favourable soil for the reception of his precious seed. And was this last hope, which he had siezed with all the despairing energy of a drowning man, to be torn from him by new disappointments? The powerful form of the noble musician bent under the sorrows of his despairing heart, he folded his hands, and his head sank upon his breast with an expression of deepest anguish.

'Oh Lord, my God,' he groaned, 'dost Thou no more work wonders for Thy faithful servants? Hast Thou, too, forsaken me?'

A white robe shone through the fresh green foliage of the bushes, a slight, delicate woman glided towards him, and a hand, dazzling in its whiteness, was laid upon Handel's arm. He started, raised his eyes, and saw a youthful countenance of wondrous beauty; long fair curls fell like glistening gold upon the loveliest of shoulders. The lips of the beautiful stranger murmured like the tones of an Æolian harp:—

'Be no longer sorrowful, pious Meister, but trust in God! He has not forsaken you, therefore be of good comfort. You may calmly look forward to the morrow; I will sing your "Messiah." I need no rehearsal, great Meister; trust to me, for by God's help I shall sing without fear. Arise, noble singer, beloved of God, the victory is yours. Farewell; to-morrow, in the church, you will see me again!'

And the lovely form glided away, disappearing at the end of the garden.

The stars glittered, the sweet scent in the air grew more powerful, and Handel's soul rejoiced like a tender blossom after the greeting of the dew-angel. His delighted gaze sought the beaming, silent heavens, and his heart was lifted up in mute, warmest thanksgiving. The mild, delightful spring night was passed in faith and hope, in waking visions and blissful anticipations.

The glorious, solemn tones of the 'Messiah' overture floated like some holy spirit through the lofty aisles of the church; countless tapers cast their light upon an immense, silent crowd of reverent listeners, and a full chorus of attentive singers. A slight, white-robed figure, a wondrously beautiful girl, stood beside Handel's elevated seat; her lovely countenance was unknown to all the listeners.

Handel governed the roaring orchestra as a monarch his kingdom; he stood in the attitude of a proud hero, of a commander, the light of triumphant expectation shone in his countenance as his beaming eyes glanced around him, and every gaze was reverently and anxiously fixed upon his expressive features or upon

the steady movement of his bâton. Who could see that noble form and not exclaim,—

'The work which this mighty one has created must indeed be great, powerful, and glorious!'

The sweet, touching *larghetto* was now heard, a soft tenor voice sang, 'Consolamini populum meum,' followed by the beautiful, trustful aria, 'Omnis vallis,' and then the clear, devout voices of the choir united in the 'Et revelatibur gloria Domini.' Each of these, as also the important bass aria, 'Quis poterit cogitare diem,' the beautiful succeeding choruses, and the lofty earnest supplication, sang by a fine alto, 'O tu qui evangelizas in Sion, ascende super montem,' was received by the audience with silent but deep rapture. The joyful chorus, 'Parvulus enim nobis natus,' had died away, and the gentle pastorale prepared the way for the highest, holiest annunciation.

As the introducing chord of the recitative was sounded, Handel's uplifted arm trembled, and a fearful doubt agitated his mind; his countenance grew deathly pale, and cold heavy drops stood upon his forehead. Breathless expectation and stillness as of the grave reigned around. The unknown singer hesitated but for a moment, and then the words of the sacred narrative, 'Erant pastores in illa regione,' flowed clearly and solemnly from her lips. The bâton was at rest; Handel's countenance beamed with delight; tones such as these had never before greeted his ear. That was the voice which he had heard in his holy visions, when the angel spake unto the shepherds of the field, when his great soul had seen the heavens opened, when the glory of his God had appeared. Thus had he imagined the convincing, triumphant cry of the angel, 'Qui est Christus

—Salvator Christus!' Oh, how those tones caused his inmost heart to rejoice! He was aroused from his blissful reverie by the mighty shout of the heavenly host, 'Gloria in excelsis Deo.'

The third and last part of the oratorio was concluded, the 'Agnus Dei' had died away like a sweet zephyr, the glorious work was finished. Handel's head, bowed down by holiest joy, rested on his desk, his eyes were closed, he seemed to live only in the sounds which had passed away. He thought of the heavenly song to which he had listened with shudders of delight such as he had never before felt, of the holy voice which had sung his aria. He thought of the stranger's innocent, trustful expression in the sweet melody, 'Et pascet suum gregem,' of the agitating recitative which describes our Saviour's humiliation and reproach, and tells of His griefs and sorrows from which men hid their faces. He remembered the deep, truly divine sorrow in the singer's voice as she proclaimed the Saviour's death, the firm, glorious confidence expressed in the words and tones which spoke of His resurrection. He thought of the mighty enthusiasm which that voice had kindled in all the singers, and how they had listened in smiling wonder as the lovely stranger praised the light footsteps of the heavenly messengers of peace; he remembered the joyful emotion and the prolonged silence of the chorus after the victorious, triumphant aria, 'Redemtor meus vivit.' What rejoicing, what firm confidence rang in those tones! The Redeemer lived in that soul, He had lived for all, He had risen for all!

And at last the tones of the concluding aria, so consoling, so unearthly in their purity, rose up before him with indescribable power; that last greeting seemed to

him a message of comfort and strength for all time; he thought that the heavenly cry, 'Si Deus pro nobis quis contra nos?' must for ever re-echo within his heart, joyful, fresh, and glorious as that voice had sung it, chasing away all dark thoughts. 'Oh, faithless and despairing one!' "Si Deus pro nobis quis contra nos?"' he said, within himself, and his grateful heart beat high with joy, his strengthened, thankful soul was bathed in trustful happiness.

When at last he raised himself, with a great effort, and longingly turned his tearful eyes towards the spot where the singer had stood, he saw only the pale features of the chorus singers, on whose countenances the soft dew of deep emotion was plainly visible. The lights were half extinguished, but far below in the church the audience still sat motionless in their seats, and Handel's name, enthusiastically uttered by a thousand lips, rose in faint, broken sobs until it reached the Meister's ear.

The place which the lovely form of the singer had occupied was vacant; she had long since disappeared —when and where no one knew. On the place where she had stood, however, lay that significant greeting of angels—a pure white lily, of wondrous sweetness and beauty.

AN AMATI.

'Verstummt ist die Harfe,
Die Saiten entzwei——.'

OUR great musicians sometimes resemble glorious

bright suns, others bear in their whole being a likeness to the calm, gentle stars, while yet others remind us of the 'Will o' the Wisp,' so restlessly and mysteriously do they glide over the earth. Their curious, varying light and wonderful radiance attract our eyes, while with a mixture of interest and fear we follow their crooked, wandering footsteps and strange existence; but when their light is suddenly extinguished, our feelings are those of a child which has been left in the dark after having listened to a ghost story. I am about to relate the history of one of these mysterious musicians.

About the year 1750 the Bohemian village of Podiebrad was inhabited by a generation of powerful, remarkably handsome men, their tall forms full of life and vigour. One among them, however, surpassed in stately beauty all his companions; his name was Franz Joseph Anderle, and he was the only son of a wealthy peasant. When, attired in his Sunday garments, a jacket of dark green velvet with bright silver buttons, a red waistcoat, black velvet breeches, and a carelessly knotted neckerchief, he knelt to worship in the little church, his head slightly raised, so that his clear profile and the soft outlines of his mouth and chin were in full view, no young maiden could repeat her 'Ave' calmly and with due reverence. The youth's forehead bore an expression of something which was attractive, and indeed irresistible; his blue eyes were fixed, in deep enthusiasm, upon the picture of the Virgin, as if those eyes could desire no greater happiness than to gaze upon the holy peace of her countenance. Yet the glance of those eyes was seldom so gentle and reverent, they often glowed with a strange

light of longings and desires of which the youth was as yet scarcely conscious—the forerunners of those restless hopes and struggles known only to the strangely organized mortal whom we call 'a genius.'

And Franz Joseph Anderle was a genius, although neither he nor his friends suspected the fact. A deep passion for music reigned within him, a passion which so ruled and governed him that he withdrew himself from the pleasures of youth, and even from all intercourse with his fellow men. His mother had once brought him from Prague a small violin, which became not only the interpreter of his musicial feelings, but also his friend, his joy, his all. When the violin was given him, he crept into the most distant corners, endeavouring to draw melodies from it. The instrument was his inseparable companion, and he studied and practised until he could play a few airs clearly and distinctly. His love for music was displayed even in his earliest infancy; he could never be soothed so quickly as when his attendants endeavoured to make some kind of musical noise; even if they struck a glass with a spoon, or rang a small hand-bell, these methods were far more effectual than sweetmeats or caresses. As he grew older, he would run after every band of music, forgetting both weariness and hunger; and was several times carried home almost dead from exhaustion. His father, the rich peasant, grew impatient and angry with his son's tastes, which he considered of so 'little profit'; but the mother, a true child of Bohemia, and full of natural love for music, watched with much delight the development of Joseph's musical talent. A master for the boy was not even to be thought of; Anderle would never have allowed his

son to receive regular instruction, and Joseph was compelled to spend his days in hard work. 'It will soon drive away such foolish fancies!' said his father. In this instance, however, the simple remedy was of no avail; Joseph worked hard and did not murmur, but at night, when his parents imagined him in deep sleep, he took his violin and crept out into the woods, seated himself under a tree and practised until his arms were stiff. In the winter season he concealed himself in the barns, and neither storms nor cold could keep him from his musical studies.

Years passed on, and Joseph had a thousand times entreated his father, even with tears, that he would allow him to live for his art alone, but the old peasant was obdurate.

'Let me go out into the world with my violin!' Joseph would often cry; 'I will beg my way, find a teacher, and become a good musician.'

These speeches, however, so enraged his father that Joseph soon learned to conceal his desires within his heart, and lived on as best he could.

One August evening the youth had, as usual, hurried into his favourite woods with his violin. It was a remarkably clear moonlight night, and Joseph unconsciously slackened his pace, losing himself in contemplation of the scene, for a truly musical heart is ever open to the charms of nature. The distant blue mountains were bathed in the moonbeams, and seemed to draw nearer that their loveliness might be admired, the great pond, which legends declared to be of immeasurable depth, trembled gently under its lovely bright veil. The old trees listened silently, for the flowers rustled as if inhabited by fairies, and

the fresh, sweet air which streamed from the forest was powerful enough to strengthen and make glad the weary heart of man.

Joseph, however, gave a sudden start, and paused to listen. He heard the tones of a violin, which seemed to proceed from an old, solitary house near the boundary of the forest. The cottage had long been uninhabited; whence, then, these sounds? And *what* sounds!—the tones of a violin such as Joseph had heard in his dreams alone, the ideal of violin tones—full, warm, melting sounds, which only an Amati can produce. The invisible musician was playing a Volkslied; the execution was simple, but the long, firm stoke betrayed an accomplished performer.

When the melody was ended, Joseph rushed towards the house, a storm of varying emotions surging within him. He gazed through an open window near the door. An aged man sat near a table upon which a lamp was burning; he held in his arms the violin which possessed such magic power. The old man's features were unmistakably Jewish, but his sharp profile, retreating forehead, and small, restless eyes made no disagreeable impression, for a long white beard, snowy curling hair, and a mouth extremely gentle in its expression soon made all the harshness of his countenance to be forgotten. His dress was a long grey robe, secured above the hips by a black cord. At his side, but nearer the window, and exposed to the full light of the moonbeams, sat his daughter, a girl about eighteen years of age. She sat dreamily, her hands folded in her lap, her rich black hair was gathered into a knot, and fell almost to her shoulders, and her features showed the per-

fection of oriental beauty. She was a true daughter of Judah, somewhat bowed down, as if carrying the weight of invisible fetters, and wearing the deeply mournful expression of those who sat and wept by the waters of Babylon.

'Forgive me for breaking in, but your violin attracts me irresistibly! Whence has it that magic sound? Oh, teach me your secret!'

Thus exclaimed Joseph Anderle, as he rushed into the room where sat the father and daughter. The old man started up, and instinctively clasped his violin more firmly, while Leah gazed at the youth, half in terror, half in delight; how handsome he was in his excitement!

'I pray you have pity upon me—give me lessons! I am rich, I will pay whatever you ask.'

'I came here only three days ago, wishing to rest from my wandering life, and neither play or teach; but as you seem so anxious to learn, I will teach you what I know, little as it is.'

'Can my violin ever sing like yours?'

'Scarcely, young man, for my violin is almost a marvel—it is a true Amati!'*

Joseph examined the insignificant looking violin with deep reverence not unmingled with coveteousness. This, then, was a real Amati! he had often heard of those valuable instruments.

'Is no such violin to be had now?' he inquired, after a pause.

'Oh, there are yet many Amati, but none would sing like mine. My violin has received the blessing of a dying man.'

* Violin made by the Amati family, who lived at Cremona in the latter half of the sixteenth century.

The youth sighed heavily, turned away, and related in few words the history of his love for music. After some conversation between the two men, it was decided that Joseph, instead of practising in the woods, should come to the cottage by night and receive instruction. Regular lessons by day were out of the question, as old Anderle would never have allowed his son to receive them. Fortunately for Joseph, he, as the son of a wealthy man, received a liberal allowance of pocket-money, for the expenditure of which he was required to account to his mother alone; the lessons were to be paid for out of this fund. When the arrangements were concluded, to the satisfaction of both parties, Joseph hastily departed, but not to his home, his heart was too full; he took refuge in his beloved woods, threw himself into the grass in a frenzy of joy, and dreamed away the time until morning. What were his dreams? Of the lovely eyes of the young Jewess? Oh, no—of the wonderful Amati. He had scarcely glanced at Leah.

Isaac, the old Jew, was not an artist in the true sense of the word; he was a wildly-educated virtuoso of considerable talent. He had led a roving life, pitching his tent now here, now there, and wandering restlessly over the earth, his violin sounding now at joyful feasts, now in scenes of sadness. In his boyhood he had long wandered about with a second-rate violin virtuoso, had learned from him the first principles of his art, shared with him care and sorrow, and in his pure love for music had rendered him the most self-sacrificing services. When at last his friend and master died from disease of the chest, he left his Amati to Isaac, and in his dying moments pronounced a bless-

ing over the instrument, and bestowed it upon his pupil. From this time Isaac looked upon the Amati as his greatest treasure, guarding it jealously and never losing it from sight; as he advanced in years he would more willingly have sacrificed wife and child than this his sweet comforter. It sustained him through all trials and afflictions, it was his life, his happiness. When his beloved wife Rebecca died, his violin sang the most touching of elegies; but then he took his little daughter by the hand and wandered away, leaving to others the care of the burial. And when the days came in which he was compelled to hunger, that his child might be clothed and fed (and these days were, at first, not few in number), he seated himself in some corner with his Amati, and drew from it tones which brought forgetfulness of suffering. He often played until he fainted, but even then his hand never relaxed its hold of the violin. At night his treasure rested upon the covering of his wretched bed, and if he was seized by the painful spasms which grew more frequent and more tormenting as he advanced in years, he would stretch out his thin hands, gently stroke the strings, touch the neck and the bridge, and then bear his sufferings without a murmur.

Leah, his beautiful and much-loved child, had long been accustomed to regard the Amati with deepest awe and reverence. That violin, which she had never ventured to touch, seemed to her a part of her father's life, nay even of his soul. She listened with a kind of devotion to every tone of the wonderful instrument, which was never without its influence on her heart. If at night those magic sounds escaped from her father's room and trembled through her little sleeping-

chamber, Leah joyfully received them into her peaceful dreams, spreading them forth until they became a broad, calm river, which blissfully received her into its sounding depths.

Since her father had accepted the handsome youth as a pupil, however, Leah's dreams had gradually assumed a different form. She was always present at the lessons, and seeing that she was not observed either by master or pupil, she devoted herself, body and mind, to the dangerous pleasure of watching the varying lights and shadows of an impassioned spirit upon the handsomest of foreheads. She spent the whole day in longing for the night, the handsome countenance of the youthful musician was ever before her, his wonderful eyes were ever gazing upon her; and at night no peaceful stream of melody rolled its calm waters around her, the violin tones raised a deep, wild ocean, and every wave bore the form of him she loved. The dear features smiled, and two arms were longingly stretched towards her, but when she bent down to embrace the beloved form it melted away like a shadow, ever near, yet ever unattainable. The more passionate the heart, the more secret the affection, and Leah's countenance showed no trace of her soul's conflicts and struggles. Summer, autumn, and winter passed by, and as spring drew near she felt for the first time that her very life was giving way to the mighty passion which consumed her whole existence as a drop of water is swallowed up in the ocean. Those feverish shudders of delight when Joseph's step was heard in the distance, that trembling anguish if his arrival was delayed, those long, weary hours when he came not, those nights disturbed by wild visions were surely

and rapidly undermining her health. And Leah rejoiced as her bodily weakness increased, for there are times when every hope is either madness or crime, when there is but one consolation for the aching heart —the thought of death.

Joseph himself knew nothing of all this, and scarcely noticed the lovely girl; he would sometimes speak a few words when he came and went, or ask some question on an indifferent subject, but that was all. He seemed to have no thought except for his lessons, and his progress was such as almost to terrify his instructor. But notwithstanding the satisfactory results of his studies, the youth still remained depressed and gloomy; deep melancholy was expressed in his countenance and in his whole manner. Leah added his secret sorrow to her own, and so suffered doubly.

At last, one evening, Joseph suddenly said to Isaac,—

'The more I learn, the more miserable I feel. Of what use is execution if the tone remains weak and powerless? My violin disgusts me, its creaking makes me ill! Why did I hear your Amati?'

He cast his instrument upon the table until it rang again, and then approached the Jew, trembling with excitement, as he whispered,—

'I must tell you all, or my heart will break! You alone can heal my sorrow! you alone can give me health and happiness! For the sake of my poor soul, sell me your violin!'

The Jew became deathly pale, and convulsively clutched his beloved Amati.

'Sell it, I conjure you! See, I kneel before you will you not have pity? Since the evening when I first heard its tones I have struggled against the wild

longing to possess the treasure; its sound will not leave me, it haunts me night and day. Your Amati will drive me mad! I would sell my eternal salvation to possess the violin; ask what you will, in two months I shall be of age, and I will throw my whole fortune at your feet. I would rather be a beggar and rove about in the wide world with my Amati than live and die a rich man without it.'

'Do you know that you are asking my *life?*'

'Old man, your days are numbered; how short is the time you have to live! You are weary, and the evening of your life should be peaceful and free from care; it shall be so with you and with your child. I have youth, which is to me a torment! I have strength, which does but torture me! Think how many years still lie before me! I feel that I cannot live without the Amati!'

'When I have gone to my rest the Amati shall be yours, I swear it by the God of my fathers; but as long as old Isaac lives no king, no emperor is rich enough to buy his violin!'

'Isaac, do not drive me wild! I *must* have the Amati!'

'Will you, then, slay me like a dog, that you may rob me of my violin? Then woe to you, for it will be your curse!'

'You will not—really not? Were those your last words?'

'My last; I cannot sell you the violin.'

'Then God help me! you will see me no more!'

He turned and left the room.

'No more?' murmured a hollow voice, which sounded like a dying groan. It was Leah who spoke; she now rose mechancially, hurried after the young man,

and overtook him at the house door. Joseph stopped, the girl laid her hand heavily upon his shoulder, and the light of madness gleamed in her eyes, as she inquired slowly and deliberately,—

'Would you not go away if the Amati were yours? would you be happy, *quite* happy?'

Joseph gazed long and earnestly at the speaker; she trembled before that gaze, and drew away her hand. A veil fell from his eyes; he bent over her and whispered,—

'Leah, do you love me?'

She uttered a faint cry and tried to escape, but Joseph held her fast. His heart was filled with wild joy as, quick as thought, he threw his arms round the girl's slender form and whispered,—

'Woman, I will repay your love if you will dare that for me which I suspect. Have you courage to make me happy, not for myself alone, but for *us?*'

Leah raised her black eyes, and her glance was so convincing, so irresistible, that the youth, whose heart had until now been free from all dreams of love, suddenly felt deeply touched by this self-sacrificing affection, and bent down to kiss the lovely Jewess. But the girl, with a hasty, serious gesture, prevented him, saying,—

'Wait for me every evening at the entrance of the wood, I will bring you the Amati as soon as I can obtain it.'

'But what if your father should continue firm?'

'You shall be happy, trust to me!'

Joseph had long to wait; night after night passed, and Leah came not. The young man's impatience grew stronger and stronger, the constant wavering between hope and fear was a terrible ordeal. His family had much to bear, he was so violent and ill-

humoured that every one avoided him. There were moments in which he would have been ready to slay the old Jew in order to attain his object; at other times he was ready to take his own life, that he might no longer be tormented by that one burning desire.

At last, on the ninth day, Leah came. Dawn was approaching, the sky was obscured by clouds, and a cold wind shook the folds of the long black dress worn by the Jewess. She walked so slowly and solemnly, her features appeared so pale in the dim light of morning, that Joseph was alarmed, and walked a few steps towards her. She carried the Amati, which she stretched out to Joseph. As he took it a violent shudder shook her whole frame, and with great difficulty she uttered the words,—

'There, there—take it and be happy; but do not forget me, for I have none but you!'

'What do you mean?'

'My father is dead; I knew it must be so! He resisted my entreaties, my tears, and my despair, and at midnight, when his sleep was calm and deep, I robbed him of his treasure. I then listened at the door of his chamber; for a long time all was still, but at last I heard moans, and, knowing that spasms had attacked him, ran to fetch his comforter. I threw myself upon the bed with it, and bent over the poor old man, but it was too late. He knew his daughter, and with his last breath he called her "murderess." Now keep your promise, for I have robbed—I have murdered for you!"

She fell at his feet, but Joseph raised her.

'Wretch!' he said, coldly, 'what have you done? I did not wish that; God knows I would not have

had it so! Why did you not let me die rather than stain your soul and mine with a murder so fearful? The prize is unworthy of such a sacrifice.'

Leah started, and a fearful change passed over her countenance as she convulsively pressed her hand to her heart. She cast one last glance upon the man she had loved so unspeakably—even to crime—a glance before which Joseph forgot even the possession of his Amati, and her voice was deathly in its calmness, as she said,—

'Father, you are avenged! your murderess is judged!'

She turned, and with firm steps walked towards the house, disappearing within the threshold.

Twelve years had passed since that eventful morning, and Franz Joseph Anderle was much changed. He was now a wealthy man, had undertaken the management of his father's brewery, had married a rich wife selected by his parents, and was the father of two children. He could scarcely be called handsome now; his countenance was gloomy, and the glance of his eye languid. He was never seen to smile or to seek amusement, he never laughed or played with his children, he was gentle with all men, but silent and reserved as the grave.

On the day when he obtained possession of his dearly-bought treasure, he had been attacked by a violent nervous fever, and consequently tormented by the wildest fancies. He never lost sight of his Amati, and it was a fearful scene when he raised himself in bed, and his rolling eyes glared around him as he played heart-rending melodies upon the violin. At

such moments all his friends would fly from him, pursued by an irresistible sensation of fear and horror; his mother alone still knelt at his bedside, praying and crossing herself until the last unearthly sounds had died away.

When Joseph was recovering he inquired for Leah. No one knew her fate, but one of her little shoes had been found on the banks of the deep, calm pool; the all too-loving heart was at rest.

Joseph shuddered as he locked up his Amati, swearing never to touch it again. He tried to live as others lived, but his heart seemed ready to break, and his existence was that of a rose-tree which has been planted beneath a stormy sky, and bears thorns and leaves, but no flowers. He struggled against the desires which raged within him, until at last he could fight no longer. He took his Amati, kissed it as a sacred relic, and with it wandered far, far away. He travelled to Poland and took up his abode in Warsaw, where he passed his time in practising and hearing music, until at last he appeared before the public. His technical knowledge was truly remarkable, and his gloomy, impassioned music had an indescribable effect upon his audience, the very tones of his instrument had magical power. No efforts were spared to induce so remarkable a genius to remain in Warsaw; the most advantageous terms were offered him, but it seemed as if, with the violin, he had inherited the restless spirit of his dead master. Neither money nor fame could detain him more than a few days in any town; but his name soon became renowned, and his tour through Poland and Hungary resembled a triumphal progress. Crowds rushed to hear him, the most

distinguished patrons showered favours upon him, and he was almost worshipped by his audience. This brilliant career had many charms for Joseph; his countenance grew lighter, he was borne up by the waves of applause which surged ever higher around him, and enjoyed the pleasures with which his path was so richly strewn. He never thought of home; his wife and children were to him but vague shadows; he had sacrificed for them no small share of his life and energies, and considered that in so doing he had fulfilled all his duties. He could now live for music, he was the possessor of the Amati; the two most glowing desires of his heart were fulfilled. Yet the beautiful form of the sorrowing Leah was present to his mind even amid the turmoil of a changeful life, and at length his wild joy died away, giving place to bitter, remorseful sadness. While the name of Franz Joseph Anderle flew through half the world, and hundreds thronged to see this new star in the heavens of music, the wonderful musician sickened, and grew more gloomy day by day. His heart was assailed by the suspicion that those around him wished to steal his violin, and with it the very soul of his art. This strange fancy grew stronger hour by hour, becoming a fixed idea, at last a mania. The old Jew himself had not guarded his treasure so carefully, so anxiously. His nights were sleepless, and he was haunted by the pale, tearful countenance of the beautiful and unfortunate Leah. He called her by name, his voice full of remorse and tenderness; he stretched out his arms to embrace her shadowy form—in vain, it pointed to the violin and wrung its hands in despairing supplication, while Joseph pressed the instrument closer to his

heart, and sank back, half fainting, among the cushions of his sofa. These scenes were repeated at short intervals, and he constantly changed his place of residence, avowedly to escape from the phantoms which tormented him. The physicians shook their heads, recommended change of scene and a return to Bohemia; but their skill was unavailing, for many sad weeks passed by, and Joseph's condition was still unchanged. At the end of this time the musician suddenly disappeared—no one had seen him depart. He was anxiously sought and inquired for, the newspapers were filled with questions and suppositions respecting him, and the musical world vainly endeavoured to throw some light upon his mysterious disappearance. At last the following announcement appeared in the Bohemian newspapers:—

'The mother-country has received her gifted child; the lost one has returned. The body of Franz Joseph Anderle now rests in Bohemian soil; his last song was heard in his native land. In Podiebrad, the place of his birth, there is an old, ruined hut which has been many years uninhabited. The cottage stands near the wood, and is much dreaded by the country people, who declare it to be haunted. Last Sunday evening strange, piercing sounds were heard from the interior of this hut; the villagers drew near to listen, and recognized the long-drawn tones of a splendid violin. No one dared open the door, and the listeners spoke in whispers of an old Jew who had lived and died in the cottage, while several declared that this very Sunday was the anniversary of his death. At length the chaplain

was summoned. The worthy man sprinkled the threshold with holy water and prayed silently, while the wonderful music still swept on, now wild, gloomy, and awful, now so unspeakably soft and touching that tears ran down the cheeks of the listeners. But the music suddenly ceased, in the midst of the loveliest, most peaceful adagio—a loud cracking sound was heard, followed by a heavy fall. The villagers rushed in, and saw the far-famed violinist, Franz Joseph Anderle, lying dead upon the ground; by his side was a broken Amati. He grudged a living musician the possession of his treasure, and could not part from it even in death. His countenance, however, bore an expression of peace which had never before been seen upon those features, an expression of rest which in life had been unknown, a fulfilment of those longings which had ever glowed in his eyes. God, in His infinite mercy, has doubtless resolved into eternal harmony the piercing discords of that mysterious soul.'

EXTINGUISHED STARS.

Jetzt ist's gar still und dunkel,
Verweht ist Blatt und Blüth',
Der Stern ist knisternd zerstoben,
Verklungen das Schwanenlied.

HEINE.

A SPLENDID birch-tree once stood upon a velvety lawn, gay with many-coloured flowers, and gazed boldly and fearlessly out into the world; its roots were

bathed by a cool spring whose waters were of crystal clearness. There is scarcely a more pleasing sight than that afforded by a powerful birch-tree, with its tall silvery stem and bright green leaves, whose tender cheeks the zephyr embraces with unusual tenderness. The birch-tree is the true poetry of the forest; but the tree of which we are now speaking was peculiarly beautiful, and we might seek far and wide without finding so magnificent a tree or so charming a streamlet. This was known to the spring time and to all the flowers and trees in the land, the tall birch and the lovely brook were alone ignorant of their charms. Eternal spring rested upon the forehead of the birch, therefore did his boughs rustle so unceasingly; magic melodies floated around him, sank down to the earth, into the hearts of the flowers, and floated out into all lands, while the trees joyfully shook their branches, and even the solemn old pines and firs who bore upon their foreheads the icy mark of winter, forgot their snowy locks and thought that the summer had returned. It often seemed as though the forests and all living things within them must be holding solemn worship, so grand, so holy were the harmonies which the birch-tree sent forth into the world. The brook, however, was the happiest among the listeners, for was she not the first to hear every sound, every melodious sigh, every breath from the beloved tree? Was not his form lovingly reflected in her silvery waters, and might she not sweetly re-echo those dear sounds which fell from his branches? The brook, too, could sing, her melodies were graceful, clear, and charming, and the beautiful tree smilingly bowed his head as he listened. But more delightful

than all were the duets which the brook and the tree often sang together; the glorious birch bent lower and lower as he mysteriously whispered with his beloved, and the golden light from his leaves sparkled in the crystal stream; the waters rose, uniting their melody with the song of the birch, until none could tell whether the magic melodies floated down from the tree or arose from the brook. The singers had always a large audience; beetles, birds, and butterflies came from far and near, crowding round them to listen. True, it sometimes happened that a fat humble bee, in compliance with his custom of grumbling, assumed an important air, remarking that 'the brook's melodies would be far more attractive, were they sung in the key of E major instead of C minor; the time, too, was too fast!' or a jealous, snappish woodpecker, proud of his chopping, announced that the birch was injuring himself by too much singing, his voice was not so powerful as in by-gone days. But the grateful cries of applause from the crowd of delighted listeners entirely drowned such malicious buzzing and cawing.

Thus, day by day, they lived, sang, and loved; neither could live alone, and although they seemed to live apart, their lives were one harmonious whole. Even in their dreams they whispered together, and the brook spoke of the wonderful tree to all the flowers, while it seemed as if the tree himself were singing, so glorious was the song of the pure streamlet. The flowers gazed admiringly upon her, and bowed their heads as she passed; but the love-rose was more daring, and warmly embraced the brook, who flowed joyfully onwards, her waters tinged with a rosy hue.

The angels who dwell in the blue-robed Paradise could watch the birch and the streamlet at their charming play, and never grew tired of listening to their loving converse.

'Oh, if we could but have those dear, loving ones here in our heavenly Paradise!' they said, as they gazed down with such longing smiles that the flowers of earth shed tears. And the merciful God knew the desires of His bright angels and said to the sun,—

'Let thy softest kiss, glowing one, dry up the clear streamlet, that it may flow more glorious in our heavenly pastures; in place of earthly flowers, angels shall bow their golden locks before it!'

'And what of the glorious tree?' asked the angels.

'He will follow his faithful, sisterly companion,'—was the reply; 'they are for ever united.'

And the sun's burning rays suddenly kissed the pure, sparkling brook, as it told of the singing, glittering tree to a crowd of listening flowers. The streamlet expired beneath that fiery kiss, beneath those scorching beams, and the undying rose of love bent mourning over her grave.

And the beautiful tree? When the lips of his living sister and companion grew dumb, when her bright eye was closed, when her soul, that pure mirror of the tree, had passed away, his boughs sank down to the ground, the gold faded from his luxuriant foliage, and fell down in tears, his fresh green leaves withered slowly, slowly his joy, his beauty, his strength, and even his life departed from him—the wonderful, glorious tree was dead.

I would I had but written a fable—it is not so, for the birch-tree and the brook have lived and loved in

human form upon our earth. The tree, with whose sweet music the poetry of the forest grew dumb and slept, was named FELIX MENDELSSOHN, and the wonderful brook was a noble woman, upon whose forehead shone the glittering diadem of music—a loving wife, a tender mother, the sister and dearest friend of our immortal musician—FANNY HENSEL.

A FIRST LOVE.

'Im stillen Klostergarten
Eine bleiche Jungfrau ging,
Der Mond beschien sie trübe,
An ihrer Wimper hing,
Die Thräne zarter Liebe.'

UHLAND.

A FEARFUL thunderstorm was raging over Vienna and its lovely neighbourhood. It was evening, and the day had been hot and sultry, for it was the month of June. Black masses of cloud hung low and threateningly over the city, flash after flash illumined the darkness, and terrific peals of thunder rent the air. At last the rage of the invisible storm-giant was spent, his voice grew fainter, and from his flaming eyes fell the heavy tear-drops of a refreshing shower. The clouds passed away, bright stars revealed themselves, and at length Father Moon rose triumphantly, wrapped in his veil of light, and seeming to say,—

'Fear not, for I am here; all danger is now past!'

The windows and even the shutters of a tall house, which was almost hidden in a narrow street, still re-

mained closed. A light was burning in a small room within, and two terrified women crouched, clasped in each other's arms, in the darkest corner of the apartment. They were sisters, girls eighteen and nineteen years of age, the only children of a quiet, industrious citizen, whose signboard with its gaudy colours proclaimed him a member of the honourable fraternity of hairdressers.

The taller of the two girls now arose, threw open the windows and shutters, extinguished the candle, and exclaimed, reassuringly,—

'Come, Doretta, away with your childish fears! The storm has been harmless, all thanks to our Holy Mother. Quick, come to the window, the air is so soft and pleasant!'

Doretta came, and the moonbeams fell on those young faces, rejoicing in them, and pausing in their onward course.

Doretta, the younger sister, possessed a plump, somewhat sunburnt countenance, fiery eyes, small red lips, and a curly mass of dark hair. Her stature was below the middle height, her movements hasty, and full of hidden enthusiasm. Johanna, the elder sister, reminded us of lilies and corn flowers, so delicately pure was her complexion, so white her hands and neck, so dark the blue of her great, clear eyes. Her head was covered by the snowy cap then worn by the maidens of Vienna, for it was the year 1759, and the hair powder so much in vogue at that time had but slightly concealed the golden hue of her rich tresses.

After a short pause the gentle voice of Johanna was again heard—

'Where can Haydn be? he generally returns long

before this time! May the all-merciful Mother have led him to a place of refuge from the storm!'

Doretta made no answer, but her bosom heaved, and the gaze of her dark eyes seemed as though it would pierce the bounds of space. The door now opened, and the honest citizen and hairdresser, Keller, entered the room. He was a brisk little man, with sharp features and restless but kindly grey eyes. He held in his hand a huge curly wig, which he powdered energetically, as he cried,—

'Well, children, where is our young lodger? He is not in his attic, for I have once climbed up the stairs to seek him; I thought he must be with you. It is strange how my old heart clings to that rogue, that merry musician. I am as anxious about the fellow if he stays away a little later than usual as if he were my own son. And if I were not anxious, my girls would be; Heaven knows we are all fond of him. Is it not so, eh?' he added, laughing.

A charming blush was Johanna's answer. Doretta murmured a few unintelligible words, tossed her head contemptuously, and angrily retreated from the window.

'Who knows where he may be?' continued the father, thoughtfully; 'perhaps that ugly old Italian singing-master, what is his name—Porpel——'

'Porpora, papa!' interrupted Johanna, softly.

'Well, Porpora, if you like; perhaps Porpora has carried him off to copy music! By St. Joseph, Haydn would do anything for those musicians and for his pupils. He rushes from one to another like a hunted deer, and is always ready to render any service. As for that Meister about whom people are now making such a fuss, I believe Haydn would be ready to clean

his boots, if Gluck would reward him by playing a tune! "Joseph Haydn would do anything for dear music's sake!" he once said to me. But all his services, all his zeal, his compositions, the accompaniments which he plays for Porpora's singing lessons, all this profits him not one kreutzer—no one pays him, because he asks nothing. It is some time since he took up his abode in our house, and I have never received from him one farthing of rent; it is true that I can wait for it, thank God, but have you ever seen him try to earn a few florins? Did you ever see upon his features a look of care or of anxiety? His countenance is always as bright and joyous as if our most gracious Emperor had bestowed upon him the whole empire, and to the surprised inquiry, "Well, Haydn, what has happened?" he will answer, with a laugh which makes one's heart grow lighter, "Porpora has praised me!" or "Gluck patted me on the cheek!" or "I have found a lovely flower!" or "The sky was so gloriously blue and the sun so bright!" Is he not as happy as a monarch upon his throne, as he sits in his attic before his old worm-eaten instrument, forgetting hunger and thirst as he plays those funny sonatas composed by Cantor Bach, of whom he talks so often. And then—those ever merry eyes! When that young man comes before me and wishes me "good-morning," I can scarcely refrain from folding him to my heart. I tell you, children, that God looks upon Joseph Haydn with His especial favour; he will either bring wonders to pass upon the earth, or he will die young—one of those things will certainly happen!'

These prophetic words had scarcely escaped from

the lips of the enthusiastic speaker when a gentle knock was heard at the door, and in obedience to his host's hasty 'Come in!' Joseph Haydn appeared upon the threshold. The water was dripping from his beautiful light hair and from his scanty clothing; he was evidently shivering from cold and wet; but his tall form was triumphantly erect, and his childlike countenance was so radiant, so full of feverish delight that Johanna sprang up hastily, ran towards him, and in a trembling voice inquired, 'Haydn, what ails you? what has happened?'

'Oh, something very wonderful, dear Johanna!' was the youth's enthusiastic reply, 'something which has made me so happy! Listen, only listen! and you must hear me, Father Keller, and Doretta too!'

And with gentle force he drew his resisting friends into the middle of the room, hastily and excitedly commencing his narrative.

'I spent some time this afternoon with one of my pupils, whose fingers, head, and heart, are far from musical; and I had promised Meister Porpora yesterday that I would be with him at seven o'clock this evening and bring away a few new arias which I wished to practise, so that the accompaniments might be ready for the Meister's next singing-lesson. Porpora's house lies some distance from that of my pupil; I hurried thither, but he was not to be found. I waited patiently about an hour, and then strolled out beyond the town gates intending to return shortly. The air was hot and sultry, no breath of wind was stirring, the flowers bent their heads, the trees scarcely breathed, and not a bird was to be seen. I gazed up into the sky, and saw that God's merciful hand was near; I

heard in the distance faint rumblings as of thunder, hastened my steps, thinking of your anxiety, and almost flew to reach your dear home, when, as I hurried along a side street, I suddenly heard the tones of a splendid piano. You may easily imagine that I stood still to listen, especially as I remembered *who* lived in that large grey house. I leant against the wall close under an open window, through which the sounds poured forth. I cannot describe what I heard, the music sank into the deepest depths of my heart. A great and glorious soul revealed itself amid storm, lightning, and thunder, fighting and struggling victoriously through all the terrors of nature, through the wild confusion of the elements, until it reached the holy, clear heavens; the glorious Meister Gluck was playing. When the sounds ceased, all around was clear and peaceful; I saw his noble form as he leant out at the window, I knew his noble, earnest countenance, the thoughtful questioning eyes which gazed far, far away. In these calm moments his heart was doubtless filled with thoughts of his glorious works hereafter to be created. I blessed the glorious musician with tears of joy and thankfulness, and slowly crept home to you, my heart and soul filled with delight. But now I must rest a little, the heavy showers have perhaps proved rather too cooling, for I am shivering, and my hands are burning with fever.'

'Yes, dear child, change your clothes at once and hasten to bed!' said old Keller, anxiously. 'Johanna must bring you a glass of hot wine.'

The maiden, deeply impressed by Haydn's narrative, answered not a word; she rose from her seat, nodded

assent to her father's speech, and cast a tearful, earnest glance upon the departing youth, while Doretta said, coldly,—

'Good-night, thoughtless one!' and the young man left the room.

The next morning brought much care and sorrow to honest Keller's household. Joseph Haydn lay in delirium, having been seized by a raging fever. A wise physician, who wore a wig and large green spectacles, was summoned, and at first announced the young man's illness to be merely a cold, but on a third visit shook his head, and declared that the ninth day might bring to pass a very unfavourable termination. Whole jugs of medicine, of every possible colour, enormous pills and yards of plaster were summoned to the assistance of the unfortunate Haydn, but all in vain, he neither recovered his strength nor regained consciousness, but lay motionless, with labouring breath and cheeks flushed with fever, smiling blissfully as he talked of heavenly harmonies and singing angels. Sometimes he must have heard delightful melodies, for his parched lips would often whisper, as he shed tears of delight,—

'Oh, how wondrously sweet are those sounds! oh, how joyous is that melody!'

Johanna spent hours by the bedside of the unconscious Haydn, weeping and wringing her delicate hands in deepest distress. Doretta, too, would sometimes creep into the room; she never spoke one word of compassion, but would cast a withering glance upon the sufferer, and then depart hastily, an angry frown upon her forehead. Father Keller wandered about disconsolately; his wigs were badly powdered and he

forgot to serve his best customers. 'Do you remember my prophecy?' he would sometimes say to his eldest daughter, 'You see—he must die!'

So the much-dreaded ninth day arrived, and a change passed over the sufferer. The redness faded from his cheeks and lips, giving place to corpse-like pallor, nearer and nearer came Death's rustling wing.

'The poor fellow will lose his young life this night, or I do not deserve to be called a disciple of the most learned Æsculapius,' said the wise physician, with confident mien.

Johanna heard it, and cold horror shook her whole frame. Excited, trembling with grief, half wild with despair, she rushed to her lonely room, and threw herself upon her knees before the little image of the Virgin. It was long here her despair could find vent in words, but at length she cried aloud,—

'Holy Queen of Heaven, oh, save my loved one! If thou dost require a sacrifice, then take me, take my young life! Holy Mother, I swear to dedicate myself to thy service for ever! I will enter a convent, I will take the veil as a bride of thy Son! Oh, hear me, and accept my vow! look with pity upon my distress! send health to the sufferer! spare, oh spare the dying one!'

Having thus prayed in the unutterable sorrow of her grief-torn heart, she raised her eyes, and fancied that the flowers which stood in their glittering vase before the image, and but a few moments before had seemed withered and dead, now suddenly revived, raising their heads and smiling brightly upon her. Johanna's child-like trustful soul was filled with joyful confidence as she cried,—

'Maria has accepted my vow!'

'Dearest father,' she said, excitedly and secretly, when they were alone together that evening, 'if our Haydn regains his health I will fulfil my dead mother's fondest wish, and take the veil in the convent of S. Ursula; the vow was made to-day, before God and the Holy Virgin.'

Her father sighed and smiled at once as he replied,—

'Dearest daughter, your sacrifice comes too late! He is doomed, the doctor has said it.'

In spite of the doctor's opinion, however, Joseph Haydn recovered, and as rapidly as he had fallen ill; the sunny smile, the merry glance returned, and he gradually regained his strength. Who could be happier than the lovely Johanna? Did not her secretly beloved Haydn spend whole days with them in their little room? Did she not wait upon him with sisterly care, drawing his chair to the window, in the warm sunshine, and laying fresh roses in his weary hands? Did she not receive every glance of gratitude from his eyes, every smile of pleasure from his dear lips? How proudly did she listen to the messengers from all the distinguished patrons, who anxiously requested news of Haydn's health! Even old Porpora, with his dark brown, wrinkled countenance and his great glowing eyes, came in person to visit his 'Birbante,' as he sometimes called the young musician, half playfully, half in anger. But he was mild and gentle when he saw the pale, weak youth, who had scarcely strength enough to stretch out a hand to his old friend. How loving was his compassionate 'Poveretto,' his 'Mio caro figlio!' The young man felt this, and his cheeks

glowed with pleasure like a lily-leaf at sunset. When he was left alone with Johanna he would talk of the delights of holding intercourse with such men as Porpora, of his much-loved, most sacred music, and of his ambitious schemes and hopes. Sometimes he would even try to compose, and many a charming sonata, many a bright, lively quartett, many a lovely song was called into existence in that quiet sick-room, under the eyes of the beautiful Johanna.

But a fierce battle was raging in Johanna's heart, for Haydn now no longer concealed the pure affection of his heart; love shone in his bright eyes, was breathed from his lips, trembled in all his words. Oh, how often did she wring her hands in secret, while it seemed to her as though she must be crushed beneath the double weight of her happiness and of her irrevocable vow! She thought of the gloomy convent walls, and wept burning tears; she now, too, became painfully aware that Doretta was gradually becoming estranged from her, although she was unable to guess the cause. Doretta was pale and gloomy, avoided her sister, their young friend, and even her father, and would often spend half the day shut up in her little room.

One morning, when all were assembled, a large letter was brought to 'The Musician, Joseph Haydn,' from one of his most distinguished patrons, the noble Count Morzin. It contained a formal nomination to the post of conductor of the count's splendid choir.* 'This appointment,' wrote Morzin, 'is but a proof of

* This was Haydn's first (temporary) appointment. In the following year (1760) he became Capellmeister to Prince Esterhazy, with a salary of 400 Gulden.

gratitude for the beautiful symphony in D major, 'lately composed for my musicians by my dear, clever Haydn.'

Haydn folded his arms and murmured slowly in deep emotion,—

'How I love Thee, oh Thou all-merciful God! as long as I live will I thank Thee, and sing Thy praise!'

And his delighted gaze rested upon the tear-dimmed eyes of his beloved Johanna as he whispered,—

'Johanna, dearest girl, I can now tell you all—we may be happy!'

Doretta suddenly left the room; but Johanna threw herself down before the speaker, clasped her hands despairingly, and cried in heart-rending tones,—

'Joseph, Joseph, cast away your visions of happiness! Love may not blossom for us on earth; we must part, and that for ever! I have made a vow to our Holy Mother, and must take the veil at the close of this year.'

She sprang up and hurried from the room. Father Keller tenderly supported in his arms the half-fainting Haydn, while amidst choking sobs he related the history of the irrevocable vow made by the most tender of hearts. As Johanna crept slowly to her own room, there to seek in silent prayer new strength for the most painful work of resignation, she heard in her friend's attic a faint sound. A strange dread thrilled through her heart, and her whole strength returned as with almost noiseless steps she flew up the stairs. Through the half-open door she beheld her sister, who had thrown open a window and climbed upon the low parapet with the evident intention of casting herself down into the street. A scream escaped from Johanna's

lips, but with lightning speed she hurried to the window and rescued the terrified transgressor.

A few months later a young and lovely maiden took the veil, and with it the name of Maria, in the convent of S. Ursula; Joseph Haydn's quiet marriage with Doretta Keller took place two days after. Joseph took a sorrowful leave of the maiden he had so fondly loved, and as he solemnly swore to be a faithful husband to Doretta, for the sake of the love she bore him, and for the sake of his love to Johanna, as he spoke with emotion of the debt owing to his fatherly friend and host, which this marriage would enable him to discharge, at least in part, the lovers embraced for the first and last time.

'Be true to your most holy music,' sobbed Johanna, 'but do not forget me, and have patience with Doretta. Come to the grating a year from this day, my love—not before. Speak no word, but look upon me, and if you are happy with your wife, carry in your hand a bunch of fresh flowers. But should it not be so, Joseph, dear, dear, Joseph! then show me the withered remains of this lovely white rosebud, my parting gift to you. And now farewell, beloved of my heart, God and all the saints be with you!'

A year passed by, and on the appointed day a slight, tall young man appeared before the convent grating, and in a low voice inquired for Sister Maria. His summons was answered by a feeble, bowed form, a pale, weary, tear-dimmed countenance gazed at him from beneath the flowing veil, and amid his blinding tears Haydn had much difficulty in recognizing the once lovely Johanna.

He silently drew forth a withered rosebud, raised it

to his lips, and kissed it fervently. The nun sighed mournfully, pressed her forehead against the grating, and gazed long and earnestly into the eyes of her beloved. Ah! the bright, glorious blue eyes were there, but the laughing glance was gone, and secret cares had left their faint traces, visible to the eye of love alone, round that pleasant mouth. And Sister Maria gazed long and earnestly at those beloved features, while Haydn's eyes were fixed upon her countenance as though they must ever so remain. Lovingly, silently they parted, never to meet again on earth. The young nun was buried a week later.*

Did that ever young, bright, glorious musician, whose beautiful melodies are to our hearts what the sweet, smiling flowers, the bright foliage of the woods, the sunbeams, and the spring breeze are to our eyes, and to our lives—did that glad, living song of praise to our good Father, from His beautiful world here below—did Haydn retain even to the close of a life of light and blessing the remembrance of this his youthful love? Did his heart, even in the dreary wilderness of an unhappy, childless marriage, still dream of loving and being loved?

Take his beautiful, charming 'Seasons,' remember that Joseph Haydn had reached his sixty-ninth year when that glorious work was created, and your incredulous hearts will be refreshed as you contemplate that fresh bright picture—the tender innocent affection of Hannchen and Lucas.

* Doretta Haydn, the youngest daughter of Keller, the hairdresser, died in the year 1800. It is also a fact that his eldest daughter, whom Haydn had loved, entered a convent.

RUE CHABANNAIS, NO. 6.

In the little narrow Rue Chabannais, one of the most insignificant streets in that wonderful, splendid town, Paris, stands a tall, somewhat gloomy house, known as No. 6. Long low buildings stand opposite and on either side, their unwashed window-panes keeping ceaseless watch upon the grey house with its broad carriage-way. The inhabitants of the little street look upon that house with a kind of pride and tenderness, deriving childish pleasure from every glittering equipage which pauses before No. 6, as from every *fiacre* which discharges its light burden at the door. At all hours of the day charming forms may be seen gliding over the threshold of the great, gloomy house, and the *modiste* of the Rue Chabannais, whose windows reveal so tempting an assortment of caps, veils, and ribbons, might gain much profitable information from a study of the costumes whose wearers so carelessly hurry past her alluring treasures. The richest, heaviest silks, the most simple black dresses, splendid velvet mantillas, light thin shawls, negligent, yet striking attire, the carefully selected light-coloured costumes of tall German women, little coquettish French hats, and English bonnets are seen in all their varieties. One might almost imagine that some wise florist resided there, whom all the flowers were hastening to consult, from the brightest greenhouse plant to the most insignificant field flower which longs for a drop of dew.

Men, young and old, whose forms and countenances are far from suggesting thoughts of spring and its

blossoms, may also be seen hastening to the mysterious No. 6, and most varied is the expression of their countenances as they return. Sometimes we may see beaming eyes and bright smiles, but more frequently the gaze is fixed and serious, and the brows are knit in deep thought, which signs, however, soon disappear, as, passing through the Place Louvois, we enter the gay and glittering Rue Richelieu.

Perhaps a second Lenormand has taken up her abode in that great house, revealing wonderful mysteries to all inquirers, and speaking dark words of prophecy!

Oh, no; magicians and sorcerers are sought under the veil of evening, or beneath the shadows of night, never in broad daylight.

Well, will you hear the mystery of the grey house? Will you follow me up those stone steps? Come, then, though many a light-footed maiden has timidly paused upon those stairs, though many a little hand has clung tremblingly to those rails, and though these white walls have heard many an anxious sigh. At length we have reached the third floor—let us pause a moment to take breath. Many a young heart, believe me, has beat higher before that closed door, for this is the abode of Manuel Garcia, the greatest singing-master of our time.

I must tell you that one of the numerous fairies who have taken refuge among the flowers from the wild turmoil and confusion of our earthly life has lent me her veil for an hour at my request; beneath its folds we are invisible, and may boldly penetrate into the musician's apartments. We pass through a small ante-room, and having cautiously opened a folding-door

to the right, we find ourselves in a plain, half-lighted apartment, tastefully and comfortably furnished. Our eyes are attracted by two beautiful busts, the one bearing the inscription, 'Eugenie Garcia,' the other that immortal name, 'Maria Malibran.' Two well-known portraits adorn the walls; we recognize the pleasing features of the Swedish Nightingale and the grave countenance of Pauline Viardot.

Silvery sounds ring forth, full and powerful, from the adjoining room; their attraction is irresistible; we gently open a side-door, and now stand, we may say, in the musician's workshop, in the true studio of the artist. The long flowing red curtains are half drawn, casting a rosy light over the room, a fine pianoforte stands in the centre, easy chairs near the fire-place, and at the side an ottoman strewn with sheet music. The elegant marble table is covered with books, music, portfolios, and papers of all kinds, a music desk, bearing a copy of 'L'Ecole de Garcia, l'art du Chant,' stands opposite the singer. A breath of poetry pervades the room; Garcia is sitting at the piano, his pupil standing at a short distance from him.

The Maëstro is very tall, unusually slight, and of truly feverish excitability, his features are thin and deathly pale, his black wavy hair falls upon his lofty forehead, his eyes are dark, restless, and fiery. Now he listens with fixed attention to the swelling tone as it escapes from the lips of the singer, now his head is impatiently thrown back as he bestows upon his pupil a word of praise or of blame, sometimes a good-humoured smile, polite sarcasm, or a graceful jest, surprisingly intermingled with frowns of displeasure and violent stampings of the Maëstro's feet as he angrily

springs from his chair. How seldom does he speak a word of praise! But one warm expression of approval from the lips of such a master is a sunbeam which is able at once to open the most firmly closed buds of perseverance and zeal.

How careful is Garcia's treatment of the human voice, that most precious gift entrusted to him. How gently, how tenderly does he watch over it, how anxiously does he strive to preserve its principal charm, the fresh, melting tones of youth. Whatever may have been said against Garcia's method, it is impossible, under his direction, to lose that most precious quality of the voice, so closely does he follow in the footsteps of nature, How firmly he insists upon the necessity of frequent pauses for rest! Only listen now, as he addresses his pupil, whose expectant gaze is fixed upon him,—

'La fraîcheur et la spontanéité sont les qualités les plurs précieuses de la voix, mais elles sont aussi les plus fragiles. La voix qui les perd ne les retrouve jamais, le timbre en reste félé sans retour. Dans les premiers jours les éléves ne devront pas se livrer à leurs exercises pendant plus de cinq minutes consécutives seulement, les études, ainsi mesurées, pourront se renouveler chaque jour à quatre ou cinq reprises, séparées par de grands intervalles. Puis le temps consacré au travail pourra, en s'augmentant par cinq minutes à la fois, être porté à une demi-heure, limite qu'on ne devra pas dépasser, Au bout de cinq à six mois, on pourra porter jusqu'á quatre le nombre des demiheures d'exercise, mais on se gardera bien d'aller audelà, encore est-il bien entendu qu'elles seront espacées par de grands repos.'

'The singer recommences her task. Her whole form is reflected in a large mirror which hangs behind the Maëstro, no movement of her features can escape her observation, every frown, every quiver of the eyelashes, every unpleasing position of the mouth is plainly revealed. Neither can anything escape the Meister's gaze; his piercing eyes are fixed with untiring attention upon the singer's features. Yet he does not criticise the position of the lips and chin, he does not confuse his pupil's mind by long and obscure dissertations on these important points, but simply repeats the instructions of the celebrated old Italian masters, Tosi and Mancini, 'Que tout chanteur doit placer sa bouche comme il a coutume de le faire lorsqu'il sourit naturellement, c'est à dire de manière que les dents supérieures soient séparées perpendiculairement et médiocrement de celles d'en bas.' He does not, like a drill-sergeant, give minute directions for the position of the body; his rules are few, but rigidly enforced. 'Ayez le corps droit, tranquille, d'aplomb sur les deux jambes, éloigné de tout point d'appui.' The arms must be allowed to hang back, 'Afin de ne pas gêner le jeu de la poîtrine.'

The lesson is ended, Garcia with kindly care escorts his pupil to the door, repeating in a condensed form the instructions which he has already given, appoints the materials for home study, and finally dismisses her with a few heart-winning words of encouragement.

See! the door is again opened, almost before it can be closed; a young pale-featured man enters, accompanied by a few older and learned looking gentlemen. He bows loftily yet awkwardly, and smiles with

much self-complacence as he presents several letters of introduction bearing signatures such as those of Meyerbeer, Auber, and Spontini. He is a singer from the provinces, his ears are filled with the flattering praises of his friends, and he wishes to study for the stage. His rich father and still wealthier uncle escort him to Paris, cousin Meyerbeer sends him to Garcia, having previously sent him from Pontius Auber to Pilate Spontini. How carelessly are these important letters thrown aside by Garcia, how cautiously does he begin to try the young man's powers! The would-be musican has brought his favourite aria, his show-piece; Verdi is his idol among composers. The recitative begins; Garcia plays the accompaniment. The young man's voice is feeble, yet piercing, broken, and unnatural, every tone is produced with most frightful exertions, the words are indistinct, the respiration misplaced. Garcia's impatience grows stronger and stronger, his thin hands fly over the keys in furious haste, the expression of his countenance changes with almost every tone, his eyes grow more restless, and his teeth are pressed together. Suddenly he springs from his chair with the half-stifled exclamation, 'Assez, monsieur, assez, je vous prie!' He sinks back exhausted, and a painful silence follows, until at length Garcia calmly and firmly explains the reasons which compel him to refuse the singer in spite of all his letters of recommendation from Meyerbeer and Spontini. His conversation with the offended student is marked by a calm frankness worthy of admiration, and as he good-naturedly takes leave of the astonished singer he advises him to apply to some other master, should he not have entire confidence in

Garcia's opinion, dismissing him with the most cordial politeness.

How frequently is he compelled to dismiss pupils who come to him with much presumption and half-ruined voices, hoping that his hand may yet strew a few roses over their path. He shows so little toleration for deficiencies in talent or industry, that his severity in such cases has gained for him an evil reputation; his harshness has drawn bitter tears from many eyes, but his sense of justice is ever irreproachable. He never feigns for his pupils an interest which he does not feel, or which has been forfeited by faults such as we have described, but is truly unmerciful in revealing his indifference to such disciples. One hand will from time to time carelessly strike a few accompanying chords; but the Maëstro does not look up from a book which he holds in the other hand, and the monotonous 'encore' at the close of a solfeggio is the only proof that his ear is still awake.

The most uncultivated, unformed voices are those most thankfully received by him. How gladly does he commence his arduous labours, how unweariedly, how carefully and conscientiously does he watch over the treasures committed to his care! But he is ever reluctant to undertake 'embellishments' and 'final repairs,' and as he makes no secret of his dislike to such a task, pupils who visit his secret laboratory with such intentions will fail to derive much pleasure from Garcia's instruction.

Ah! I wish that a few of our German singing-masters, who are wont to require from each of their pupils an oath of their infallibity, could themselves study for a short time under that fiery yet thoughtful,

music-loving Spaniard. They would be compelled calmly and with unbiased minds to make trial of Garcia's system, a simplified repetition of the celebrated instructions given by the old Italian masters, which system was bequeathed by old Garcia to his son, and by that son published and explained in his excellent work, 'L'Art du Chant.' Many of these travelled song-birds would return so changed as not to be recognized, chirp freely and merrily, joyfully unfold their wings in lofty flight, and laughingly relate how, in the great and beautiful Paris, in the narrow little Rue Chabannais, may be found a painless but certain cure for arrogance and vanity. Would not that be splendid ?

But hush ! hush ! our fairy has gently touched the magic veil, warning us that the appointed time is drawing near. Let us obey that gentle command, let us not displease our lovely protectress !

Dear Maëstro, farewell ! Heartily do we rejoice that we have heard you, and often, asking no fairy's aid, shall we in imagination fly back to gaze upon you with admiration and gratitude. Our anxious minds will be soothed by the golden and silvery tones which your word of power draws from young and rosy lips, the bright dew-drops of their pearly roulades will fall upon us like a refreshing shower, and amid the sweet visions which they bring to our weary hearts we shall no longer hear the unresolved discords of our mortal life.

A MELODY.

'Hör' ich das Liedchen klingen
Das einst die Liebste sang.'

HEINE.

LATE in the autumn season of the year 1792 a troupe of actors had established themselves in stately old Rouen (formerly the capital of Normandy), which, with its imposing cathedral, its beautiful churches, and its dark, narrow streets would seem to assure us that no worldly pleasures are tolerated within its walls. The large, gloomy town theatre was rented by the director at a tolerably high rate, and performances were now given five times a week. The orchestra was tolerably good, also the acting, and as the performances consisted entirely of operas, the worthy citizens of Rouen had, at the cost of a small entrance fee, abundant opportunities of admiring the productions of their celebrated countrymen Mehul, Sully, and d'Alayrac, and those of the great Belgian, Grétry. How many a lovely maiden shed tears as she listened to the faithful Blondel's song,—

'Oh Richard oh mon Roi,
L'univers t'abandonne!'

how many sighs were drawn forth by Joseph's touching melody, and how great was the delight caused by that most natural imitation of the whirlwind, in the third act of Sully's 'Isis.' The duet sung by the two Savoyards in d'Alayrac's 'Gulistan' soon, however, stood unrivalled in the favour of the—at that time—most grateful public.

It was on a rainy October evening, when the chilly

showers gave warning of approaching winter, that a young man some eighteen years of age stood upon the narrow stairs used as the stage entrance, listening eagerly at a low door which led to the green room of the theatre. He was thinly, almost poorly clad, but his bearing was noble and his form tall and slender. The old lantern over the door cast its uncertain light upon a fresh young face, and its rays were reflected in bright, cheerful brown eyes. The young man's unusually clear, lofty forehead, however, spoke of higher things than youth and happiness, the early radiance, promising most glorious sunlight, that indescribable radiance of genius shone there.

D'Alayrac's 'Gulistan' was being performed, and although the music was somewhat subdued by distance, the eager ears of the solitary listener could catch every tone. 'Now comes the Savoyards' duet,' he murmured to himself; 'yes, I hear the introduction; two bars more, and the voices strike in. Ah! if I could be rich, very rich, so that I might hear and see these things every night!' And a faint sigh escaped from the fresh, rosy lips; but still he listened, for soft and pleasing voices were borne to him. Suddenly he heard the sound of a fall, then a scream, and the door was immediately thrown open so violently that the young man staggered with fright and pain, and fell back several paces.

'What do you want here?' asked a gruff voice; you had better fetch some one strong enough to carry home little Marion, she has just fallen and sprained her foot. The performance must be concluded without the second Savoyard, and not one of us has time to care about the girl!'

'I will carry her myself!' said the youth.

'Quick, then; come in!' was the rough answer.

The youth obeyed, and soon found himself in a large, gloomy, dimly-lighted room behind the scenes. A young girl in the dress of a Savoyard boy sat upon an old broken-down chair; before her knelt a deformed old woman binding up a small foot, remarkably white and delicate.

'Mademoiselle Marion, are you ready?' said the gruff voice. 'Here is some one who will carry you home, and old Luison shall go with you and show him the way.'

The young man approached the maiden with almost courtly gallantry, and made obeisance as if to a princess. When he raised his eyes he beheld a countenance surrounded by short dark curls, a countenance of such bewitching if childish beauty, with eyes of such pure blue and so pleasing an expression that his bright smile of pleasure testified to its admiration. His smile was returned by the loveliest of lips.

'She has not hurt herself, she has only sprained her foot. All will be well to-morrow, but now let us hasten home!' said the old woman, as she threw a black cloak over Marion's slender form, and Adrian, for that was the young man's name, lifted her in his arms as lightly and tenderly as a father would bear his child. The old woman tripped on before them, carrying a lantern, and coughing as she went; so the little procession passed through a few streets of the city. It was cold, but the rain had ceased; Marion kept silence, but nestled confidingly so close to her protector that Adrian could feel her warm, pure breath upon his cheek and her curls waved over his

forehead. He walked as if in a dream, and so slowly that the old woman often inquired, 'Is she too heavy for you?' 'Oh no!' was the fiery, eager reply.

Soon the old woman paused before a little house, saying, 'Marion's aunt lives here.' Adrian started, but he was allowed to carry his burden up the steps. An elderly, good-natured looking woman hurried towards him with many exclamations of painful surprise, and amidst sobs and kisses took Marion from Adrian's arms.

'May I call to-morrow and inquire after Mademoiselle's health?' asked the youth, pausing upon the threshold.

'Certainly!' laughed Marion; 'I thank you heartily for your services, and beg you to tell me your name!'

'Adrian Boieldieu, eldest son of the secretary to his Eminence the Cardinal de Laroche Foucaud.'

'Boieldieu! what a curious name!'

'You will remember it the more easily on that account.'

'Perhaps so.'

'Good-night!'

'Good-night!'

The scene above described gave rise to a little romance, almost touching in its simplicity. The two bright, happy children again met, they met many times, until at length they loved, and their affection was so deep, so earnest, that no thought of separation disturbed their happiness. Marion was an orphan, scarcely sixteen years of age, her lovely voice, and the indescribable grace and charm of her whole being were her sole possessions. She knew not by what chance she had fallen into the hands of the theatrical manager; her only remembrance of her childhood was

a little, sweet melody, an old Scottish ballad, which she declared had often been sung to her by a pale, fair-haired woman whom she had called 'Mother.' Adrian could not hear that melody too often, it had an indescribable charm for him, and whenever they met he would beg for the dear, dear

She did not know the words. Then he would close his eyes, or hide his handsome face in his hands, seeming to dream blissful dreams; sometimes he, too, would softly hum the melody.

Marion and Adrian met only at rehearsals; there, under painted trees and an oily moon, on grassy banks made of wood, and surrounded by ropes, lanterns, torn scenes, and old rubbish, their innocent affection blossomed, casting a softening light upon the wretched confusion around them. Nightingales and murmuring streamlets were not needed to give poetry to their affection, their hearts were filled with the true spirit of poetry, and their happy unclouded love could suggest joyful strains alone, soft complaints and sorrowful melodies were not so much as understood.

At Marion's request Adrian had been allowed to attend the rehearsals. 'He knows so much about music!' she said to the manager, with whom she was a favourite, 'and Broche, the organist, gives him lessons every evening. He can sing all my parts, and if that destestable Monsieur Carreaux plays a false note upon his violin, or if old Martin's bassoon strikes in too early, he is instantly aware of it. He

will certainly be a great musician some day!' In consequence of these praises, the manager, who was also the conductor of his orchestra, sometimes allowed young Boieldieu to conduct an overture or an act at rehearsal. At such times the music was unusually fiery, and the old musicians would laugh with pleasure and astonishment at their own performance, while Adrian's countenance was radiant with delight.

'See!' he would say to Marion, whose pride and pleasure knew no bounds when she could sing her little parts under his direction, 'I am now beginning to flap my wings in preparation for my loftier flight, I must be a true musician, and not only a musician, I must create, I must compose! I will write operas and you shall sing them, and so our names will fly through the world together.'

'And then we shall be rich, wear fine clothes, drive in a carriage, and have a splendid house!' continued Marion.

'We will live in Paris, and Mehul and the glorious Grétry will visit us; they will press my hand and speak kindly to me!'

'And they will admire your pretty little wife, and tell every one how dearly we love each other, and how happy Marion and Adrian are together.'

And Adrian laughingly kissed the little hands of the charming prophetess.

The lovely dream was soon, however, to be dispelled; the pleasant play had a mournful termination. The grim old organist, Broche, having accidentally become aware of his pupil's operatic studies and occupations, furiously hastened to Adrian's father, and revealed to him his son's 'disgraceful tricks,' adding,—

'I always said no good would come of him, behold the fulfilment of my words! The boy is a vain, talentless fellow!'

Adrian was surprised in the act of conducting, dragged away, and strictly guarded. When after an interval of eight days he regained his liberty, the actors had removed from Rouen 'by command,' and no trace of them was to be found. The loss of his beloved Marion was most deeply felt by Adrian; but his health was not broken down by grief, his nature was strong and vigorous, and eventually conquered his sorrow. In a kind of joyous despair he now devoted himself entirely to his beloved music, played, composed and studied with extraordinary zeal, and often spent long hours of the night in perusing excellent theoretical works on the construction of operas. He longed to compose an opera, and travel with it to Paris; all his desires, all his hopes were centred in the busy whirl of the great city. An old poet who resided in Rouen supplied the young man with a very inferior, hastily-written libretto, which Adrian considered delightful, and for which he immediately composed the music.

Two years were passed in studies, labours and hopes such as these, until, one September morning, Adrian Boieldieu set out for Paris, the score of his opera under his arm, and thirty francs in his pocket. Arrived in the wonderful magic city, the young inexperienced musician was immediately overwhelmed by the waves of the busy life, they met above his head and almost deprived him of consciousness. Fortunately a wave, more compassionate than its fellows, bore him to the house of the celebrated piano manufacturer Erard. In that hospitable, music-loving household, Boieldieu enjoyed

the privilege of playing on the splendid instruments, and, what gave him yet more pleasure, he could hear them played, for Erard received as guests all the most eminent musicians. Boieldieu's playing soon attracted the attention of all hearers, not so much for its brilliancy as on account of his pleasing execution, among those hearers being such connoisseurs as Rode and Garat.

Adrian, however, was well aware that his talent needed much cultivation before it could be made a source of gain in a city so rich in musicians as Paris, he therefore again devoted himself to his favourite study, that of composition, at the same time endeavouring to gain a livelihood by tuning pianos. This was hard, dry bread to him, and it was often eaten with tears, but Adrian's unconquerable cheerfulness and the elasticity of his disposition bore him up against the hardships of his life.

One raw, dull, February evening, Boieldieu, who had now spent nearly six months in Paris, had returned, weary, and half-frozen, to his comfortless attic, when he found a note from Erard, requesting him to hasten to No. 30, Rue Richelieu, where a skilful tuner was required for a piano on the second floor. The young man immediately set out, found the house, and was conducted into a small but richly and tastefully furnished drawing-room, in the centre of which stood a handsome piano. A bright fire was blazing cheerfully upon the hearth, and the loveliest flowers, tastefully arranged, adorned the walls; the curtains were drawn, and the room was lighted by a lamp which hung from the ceiling. Adrian felt an indescribable sensation of warmth and comfort, it seemed as if he must here rest and dream. He forgot the purpose for which he had

been summoned, seated himself at the piano, and began to play. The tones were at first full and powerful, but they grew softer and softer, until at last, he knew not how, he dreamed again that bright happy dream of his first love, and as his fingers glided softly and slowly over the keys, they called forth the melody of the old Scottish ballad. A curtain of purple velvet which covered the doorway was drawn aside, tremblingly and hesitatingly a lovely voice repeated the refrain, 'la-à, la-à—la, la!' a beautiful form appeared on the threshold, and Marion rushed into the dreamer's arms. Yes, yes, this entrancingly lovely being arrayed in rose-coloured silk, with the laughing eyes, with the delicate form, was the little maiden of the Rouen theatrical troupe.

'Oh, do not be angry, Adrian!' she cried, after a pause, with the most engaging *naïveté*. 'I am married, and my name is Madame St. Aubin. I have been for the last year engaged at the Opera Comique; I please the Parisians, and they please me too. Every one said that I could not and must not wait for you, as I should get old and ugly; I shed many tears, but they were unavailing. St. Aubin is good; he travels much, and sometimes I do not see him for weeks together.'

Adrian smiled mournfully, as he continued to gaze upon her, and was silent.

'Believe me,' she added, coaxingly, 'I have often, oh, so often, thought of you, and I know that it would have been a thousand times better had I belonged to you! Do you remember how splendidly we used to dream?'

And it seemed as though Adrian remembered those dreams, for he impetuously drew his beloved towards him, hiding his pale countenance upon her neck.

Some few months later an operetta, composed by a certain Adrian Boieldieu, and named 'La dot de Suzette,' was performed at the Opera Comique, the principal actress being the far-famed, much-esteemed Madame St. Aubin. The little opera was remarkably successful, the Parisians were electrified by that fresh, charming music, a perfect treasury of original ideas. But Madame St. Aubin, how she acted! how she sang! Her name, with that of the composer, was uttered by a thousand lips; both were greeted with tumultuous applause.

After the opera there was a little supper party at Marion's house.

'See,' she cried, in unrestrained joy, as Adrian entered the room, his countenance radiant with pleasure, 'one, at least, of our old dreams has been fulfilled; I have sung your melodies, and we were received with loud shouts of joy. I am rather doubtful whether Grétry and Mehul will come to us in consequence, my poor friend, but here is some one who is anxious to make your acquaintance, and has begged for permission to press your hand; his name is Monsieur Cherubini!'

And a tall, handsome man, thirty-two years of age, approached, and with the most engaging cordiality embraced the delighted composer.

Many years had passed, Adrian Boieldieu's name was numbered among the brightest stars in the musical heavens of France. The graceful 'Caliph of Bagdad,' 'Red Riding-hood,' and other works had laid the foundation of his undying fame. The genial composer obtained an appointment as professor of the pianoforte at the Paris Conservatoire, but a still more honourable post awaited him, and he travelled to St. Petersburg, where

he became conductor of the Imperial choir. In the year 1811 he returned to Paris, for the rough climate of Russia had proved a severe tax upon his health. He brought with him, to the delight of his friends, several new compositions, splendid military music, and the choruses to Racine's 'Athalie.' In his heart-felt joy at finding himself once more in his native country he immediately on his arrival commenced and completed the bright, sparkling opera, 'Jean de Paris.'

Nevertheless his sky was fast becoming cloudy. The name of young Rossini was in France, growing more and more popular, and his operas were welcomed with enthusiasm. Boieldieu was crushed into the background, and even 'Jean de Paris' did not meet with the expected success. He fell ill, and his heart grew desponding; his desperate exertions and labours brought but insignificant results. Sunshine, bright, warm sunshine, was urgently needed to keep from withering the half-opened bud of his creating genius. But whence should those bright rays shine for him.

Marion had disappeared even before his departure for St. Petersburg, and people laughed as they related that her own husband had carried her off; for the time, Adrian's friends could do nothing for him. Four long years passed on, and Boieldieu remained without an appointment worthy of note; body and spirit grew weaker, and deep heaviness reigned in the heart of the once happy musician. The physicians sent him to Italy, and the thoughtful care of his friends prepared the way; without their assistance he could not have undertaken the expensive journey. He could not, however, endure a long absence from Paris and from

his ardently beloved Cherubini, but gathered his failing strength, and set out on his return journey. But at Brussels his exhausted frame gave way, and Adrian Boieldieu fell seriously ill. He was removed from the noisy hostelry to a quiet house, and the notable musicians in the town vied with one another in their attentions of the sick musician. The inquiries and messages of condolence were unceasing; all were anxious to contribute to his ease, comfort, and support. The sick man knew it not, he lay in the laughing delirium of fever, dreaming of laurels and eternal fame.

It was the ninth night of his illness, his attendant was sleeping soundly, and the night-light was burning dimly and fitfully. The invalid suddenly raised himself and gazed around, for it seemed to him as though some memory of by-gone days were mingled with his dreams. He listened. No—it was no delusion, for in the adjoining room some one was singing; the voice was weary and broken, yet sweet,—oh, so well-known, so sweet! And the song? It was the charming little Marion's dear old Scotch ballad! And he saw her now, that Marion, she appeared before him in all her loveliness, in the full attraction of her youth, love, and beauty. She smiled, beckoned, and sang, and he could not but join softly in the refrain 'la-à, la-à—la la!' But now a faint scream was heard from the adjoining room, a cry full of mingled joy and sorrow; a horrible stillness followed.

As morning drew near the attendant awoke, to find his charge in a deep swoon. Thus he lay many hours; he was unconscious of the physician's visit and of the care and solicitude of those around; he did not hear them whisper that Madame St. Aubin, the once cele-

brated singer at the Opera Comique, had died that night in the little adjoining room.

'It is a happy release for the poor creature,' said the doctor; 'her husband deserted her after the loss of her voice; she led a miserable life, and the directors of the theatre sometimes gave her employment, and supported her out of pure compassion. She lived in the recollections of the past, and was worn out, quite worn out, and useless.'

Such was the funeral oration of one who had been among the most charming, most popular singers of her day.

A week later Adrian Boieldieu was pronounced out of danger, and at the same time he received a letter from Paris, bringing intelligence of Mehul's death, and the offer of his honourable and remunerative post at the Paris Conservatoire. At last the bright, warm sun was shedding its rays upon Boieldieu, and under its reviving influence both body and spirit were strengthened, and awoke to new life. He travelled to Paris, where he was joyfully welcomed by his friends, the noble Cherubini at their head, and immediately entered upon his new duties. Was the fact of Marion's death known to Adrian? No one knows, for her name never again passed his lips. But he raised a monument to the memory of his beloved, a glorious monument erected upon the foundation of that pleasing, simple melody which Marion had sung so charmingly; the name of that enduring monument is 'La Dame Blanche.'

We all know with what enthusiasm that masterpiece was received, not only in France but in the whole musical world; it placed Boieldieu in the ranks of the

greatest musicians. The glorious composition always remained Boieldieu's favourite, and was his last important work. Even in his dying hours (9th October, 1834) his thoughts still seemed fixed upon it, for he smiled as he softly murmured the Scottish melody which had grown so significant to his heart and to his fame. All the faithful friends who stood around his death-bed heard at the same moment what seemed to them like a wondrously sweet, distant echo, the lovely refrain

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THE DEATH OF THE FIRST NIGHTINGALE.

In those happy days, long past, when our earth was called 'Paradise,' and was yet arrayed in all its luxuriant, undefiled splendour—a splendour which vague but entrancing legends alone reveal to us—a swan floated upon the waters of a lovely lake. The setting sun scattered golden sparks upon the watery mirror, bathing in dazzling light the plumage of the splendid bird. At that time swans could sing, for God had given them a voice, full, powerful, and glorious; the morning and evening song of the swan was a delightful hymn of praise and adoration for all nature. Thus sang the proudest, most beautiful of swans, of whom I am about to tell you; the waves trembled in delight, and the sun

paused, unwilling to depart, while the moon's pale countenance grew brighter and brighter, and even a few stars listened blissfully to the most entrancing of sounds. The bright eyes of the flowers expressed their pleasure, the trees rustled their leaves in keen enjoyment, and the shining angels (who in those days passed, every evening, around God's Paradise, to breathe upon all His creatures that they might find sweet repose) gazed upon the singer with loving eyes. The swan's song died away, exultation reigned within his breast, and he cried in triumphant pride,—

'Where is the voice more charming, more glorious than mine? I alone am the god in the kingdom of song; who will dare to compete with me?'

His challenge was followed by deep silence, but the angels' eyes grew dim and their bright forms passed onward like a gentle sigh. The flowers bent their heads and whispered among themselves. The trees shook their branches in displeasure, but the swan heeded them not, he bowed his head and slept, surrounded by pale delicate water-lilies.

But suddenly the sound of mournful, unspeakably sweet melodies trembled through the air, mingling in the dreams of all the flowers, and sinking deep, deep into the heart of the slumbering monarch of the waters. He could not look up, for his eyes were closed by the gentle force of sorrowful, until now unknown rapture. The tones grew louder, the melodies more powerful; it was a voice such as the swan had never, never heard—now rejoicing, full of delight, now plaintive, quivering with anguish, so that the proud heart of the listener trembled. With the first beams of morning the magic sounds were hushed, and the swan cast a searching

glance around. The eyes of the flowers were full of tears, the birds, with joyful cries, sang the praises of the heavenly singer, even the solemn trees were lost in sweet remembrance. For the first time the swan's morning song was unheeded; his wild heart was filled with pain, envy, and hatred, as he swam to the bank, whence, during the night, the glorious tones had proceeded, and inquired for the wonderful singer. In vain, no bird, no flower, could give him information. At length he espied a blooming rose-bush, sparkling with bright dew-drops.

'Tell me, lovely rose-queen,' said he, 'did'st thou, too, dream of sweet and heavenly melodies? And knowest thou whence flowed that wondrous strain of song?'

'I know it,' whispered the rose, blushing yet more deeply; 'the nightingale sang, that purest, most blessed of singers, the queen of the sound world, she whom I love as I love the sun!'

'Ah, I, too, sing her praises, thou lovely one!' was the answer; 'but my heart is filled with the burning desire to see, to embrace her; king and queen must love each other, sweet rose. Oh, let thy beautiful lips bear to the glorious one this message, that I love her, that I will wait for her this night, borne upon the crystal floods, upon the cool waters, kissed by the moonbeams. The scent of lotus flowers will greet her, she shall repose upon the king's breast, and our voices will blend harmoniously as they float forth over the dreaming world.'

The rose bowed her lovely head as she murmured,—

'Oh, may she not obey that luring call! my heart is filled with apprehensions of coming woe.'

Night, with her thousand beaming eyes, gazed down

upon the countless charms of the lovely earth; the swan, more dazzling, more kingly than ever before, floated upon the silvery waters, but his breast heaved in wild excitement, and his eyes shone with deep mysterious light. A warm breath of perfume, an angel's smile, seemed to sweep over all nature, as the soft flapping of wings was heard, and the nightingale sank upon the swan's breast. The monarch gazed upon her in deep astonishment. How simple was her grey dress! how slight and delicate her form! yet her eyes glistened like two diamond tears, a wonderful mixture of passionate, heart-felt delight, and deep, endless sorrow. As she gazed up at him, and, gently fluttering her wings, addressed him in her heavenly tone-language, that old malicious demon, Envy, awoke within the bosom of the swan; he seized the fluttering bird, and drew her deep down beneath the cold pitiless floods. One heart-piercing cry, and a horrible stillness crept over the waters.

The next morning found the dead body of the nightingale lying upon the bank, beneath the shadow of the faithful rose-bush, which covered her with its red blossoms, and carried even to its grave the secret of her mournful end. But an angel approached the proud swan, and solemnly pronounced the sentence,—

'The heavenly gift of song has departed from thee and from thy race for ever!'

The sentence was fulfilled. The nightingales now resort to the banks of lonely waters, and in song bewail the sad fate of their first lovely queen; every night the swans, the beautiful, shining monarchs of the waters, listen to their mournful songs, and dream, as even the children of men will dream, of their lost Paradise. In their dying hour the powerful, mysterious

longing of their heart is fulfilled. The merciful hand of our eternal Father in heaven loosens their tongues, and they breathe out their silent life in soft, melodious tones.

Our wounded, weary hearts may, too, in the last dread moments of our earthly existence, be lightened by a foretaste of the joys of Paradise; our fetters fall off, our souls rejoice, dazzling light streams upon our eyes, our ears are filled with heavenly melodies which our trembling lips endeavour to repeat—so do we enter our long-lost Eden, and men call our tuneful death-song 'The Song of the Swan.'

A NEW YEAR'S EVE.

THE last night of the old year! how sad it is to a heart which bears some secret sorrow, to a soul which has endured hardships and fruitless struggles, to a *lonely* man, be he innocent or guilty! The strange feelings of New Year's Eve are borne over even from our childhood, and the remembrance of a beloved father's grey hair, of a mother's gentle eyes, is inseparable from the sound of that significant midnight chime. Yet with these touching scenes are mingled recollections of the woes of our past life, our buried hopes awake, and painfully struggle within their graves, unfulfilled wishes loudly and vehemently demand their accomplishment, long dried tears once more begin to flow, old scars bleed afresh. A strange shudder passes over us as we stand upon the thresh-

old of the new year, a shudder which hesitates not to assail us in the most glittering ball-room as in the most pleasant family circle, a breath from that mysterious world of spirits whose warnings are heard on New Year's Eve with more reverence than at any other time.

Thoughts such as these had perhaps filled the mind of a poor lonely musician, who, on the last night of the year 1850, was sitting before his writing-desk. At any rate, it seemed as if the chilling breath to which we have alluded had passed across his forehead and cheeks, so pale were they, and so terrified was the glance of his eyes as he gazed fixedly into space. I call him 'poor' because he was a German operatic composer; he had no wealthy relations and no noble patrons, moreover he was no adept in the art of flattering theatrical managers, and could not understand why he should court the favours of certain musical critics. The applause of the public was always loud and cordial; it satisfied his heart, but nothing more. His bright, cheerful music gave many a plesant hour to the listeners; but no one thought of the composer's life, no one sought to give him even one hour of happiness, and when the audience called for him at the close of the opera, they thought they had done enough. His countenance was grave now, the fine features bore the imprint of great but patient grief, and the wrinkles upon the forehead and around the mouth must have been formed, not by the gentle hand of time, but by the hard, unmerciful hand of sorrow; for the light of youth still shone in the blue eyes, which seemed as if they had danced often and merrily in despite of affliction, and the hair was yet

black. The slender form was of the middle height, graceful and light in its movements.

The broad old-fashioned desk (with the exception of a small piano the only important piece of furniture in the large, comfortless workroom) was covered with pages of music, half-written letters, scores and pianoforte arrangements. In the midst of this confusion stood a green-shaded lamp, which cast its dim aud uncertain light upon the pages of an open book, T. A. Hoffmann's 'Lichte Stunden eines Wahnsinnigen Musikers.' The hands of the little clock pointed almost to the hour of midnight; the reader arose, and pushed the volume from him.

'Hoffmann, old Capellmeister! you understand the old sorrows of our fraternity, you have like ourselves been grieved and wounded, yet you know not how to comfort. You can but stir up weariness and thoughts of despair; you crush the heart and make dim the eyes. You are demon-like in your books as in your music, and yet I would that I had known you! Air, air, Clavigo! How oppressive is this room! I have a horror of everything—of the table, of the restless old clock, of that queer black stove—even of myself. All this is your fault, Theodor Amadeus; I must banish the remembrance of you. A walk through the streets, a breath of the fresh wintry air will chase away all the goblins. Out, then! in the great city of Berlin, where in years of childhood I have so often shouted to strangers. "A happy New Year!" will I now seek from strangers the first New Year's greeting. Perhaps that will bring me happiness,' he added, with a heavy sigh; 'my friends have hitherto wished it me in vain, we must try some

other way! My wife and children are sleeping, God bless them!'

He carefully extinguished the lamp, softly opened and as softly closed the door of his room, slowly descended the stairs, and finding the house-door open, passed out into the street. He strolled on mechanically, and soon found himself in the market-place. All was still, and there was no sign of coming festivities; but as he turned down a neighbouring street, and saw before him a well-known and much visited wine-shop, a narrow, dazzling streak of light penetrated through the closed windows on the ground floor, raising thoughts of the gay scenes within. At the same moment a little thin man ran hastily down the stone steps, and accosted the musician.

'Please come in, dear music-director!' he said, in a quick, sharp voice; 'I know that you wish to make my acquaintance, and I, for my part, have often thought of you. Come, and let us spend a happy New Year together, I am sitting here,' pointing to the window, 'in the pleasant, undisturbed society of my children and favourites, you alone were wanting. Allow me to introduce myself as Capellmeister Kreisler, or Theodor Amadeus Hoffmann, which ever you please.'

The listener pressed his hand to his forehead, drew a deep breath, and at length murmured,—

'I am either mad or dreaming! Your pardon—were you not buried long ago?'

'To some, only to some, but not to chosen ones!' laughed the little man.

They passed through the entry, and found themselves in an apartment divided into two parts by a

curiously jagged wall. In the first division stood a well-stocked buffet, the third room was occupied by a numerous company. The loveliest, most charming women, with beautiful eyes, carelessly reclined upon massive high-backed wooden chairs, while the most ridiculous-looking men, with horribly distorted features and deformed bodies stood near them, or leant upon the large oil-skin covered tables. Beautiful snowy-necked beings, arrayed in ancient costume, with veils and sweeping trains, leant upon the arms of dark-featured men in the garb of foreign countries; a lovely girl paced to and fro, supported by the arm of a fair-haired youth who wore the dress of the ancient Germans. Garments of the most ancient date, modern satin dresses, the slashed doublet and the frock-coat were seen side by side; the present and the past melted into each other, and seemed united.

The strange little man who had called himself Kreisler pressed through the throng with almost incredible vivacity. His head seemed far too large for his short, thin body, for a mass of dark, bristly hair stood up on all sides. His countenance was ugly, his thin lips were pressed tightly together, with an expression of bitter sarcasm in their corners, his eyes now sparkling and piercing, now strangely absent in their gaze, his speech was abrupt and hasty, yet not without warmth. All the men and women addressed him, or greeted him with nods and smiles, now with friendly jests, now respectfully, now with passionate tenderness; he was called 'Capellmeister,' 'Kammergerichtsrath,' 'friend,' or even 'beloved.' He replied kindly to all, drew his new friend aside, and said, with a peculiar smile,—

'These are the favourites of my heart, my children, my best friends, and my servants; I love them all, bad though some of them may look. That splendid woman, dressed in white satin, is my "Julia." Have you ever seen more beautiful shoulders and arms, more delicate hands? Can dark eyes gleam more fiercely, languish more tenderly? Her loveliness would almost cast into the shade the haughty "Princess Brambilla," with her crimson velvet mantle and plumed hat; and the alluring "Serpentina," as she walks and converses with "Student Anselmus," can scarcely bear comparison with her. How covetously are the burning eyes of the "Magnetiseur" fixed upon her! he longs to draw her slowly yet surely to himself; but she will resist his power; I know he will never win that lovely woman. Do you see "Daniel," the poor fellow? Even here he cannot refrain from whining and scratching at the wall; see how despairingly he drives his broken, useless nails into the green tapestry. Unhappy wretch, nowhere can he find peace! In that corner (you had better not look at him at all) sits the most horrible of all, the "Sand Man," who may well be feared, and not by children alone. Before him stands the "Automaton Girl;" I hear the whizz of the clock-work, doubtless she is about to dance with him. Ugh! what a horrible pair!'

He laughed a wild, shrill laugh, and the listener seemed to feel Death's touch upon his heart; he became deathly pale, and involuntarily turned towards the entrance to escape. Then his strange companion seized his hand, gazed almost lovingly into his eyes, and said gently,—

'Enough of such foolish talk, now let us have a

word from heart to heart. Come with me into the last room, where in old times I have sat so often, so merrily, with Devrient, Hitzig, and my gentle Weisflog; there we may talk at our ease. We must drink, chat, and be unreserved with each other, for no art can knit hearts together more rapidly, more firmly and sacredly than music. We musicians alone can sing from our full, warm hearts,—

> '"Seid umschlungen Millionen,
> Diesen Kuss der ganzen Welt."

'Who could read those lines without thinking of the ninth symphony? The inspired Schiller could embrace the living alone, but Beethoven could speak to the living and to the dead; the first bars of the chorus, "Freude, schöner Gôtterfunken," knocks at the portals of the grave. Champagne here!'

Scarcely had the words passed his lips when two tall, curiously shaped glasses, filled with the most restless and delicious of wines, stood before them on the table. As yet the lonely musician had not spoken a word, a heavy weight seemed to lie upon his breast, and his eyes were burning as with fire. But scarcely had the first draught of wine passed his lips when the spell was broken, and his timid reserve gave place to cordial affability.

'Do you know me, then, my kindly host, that you receive me so courteously?' he asked.

'Does the composer of "Czaar und Zimmermann," of "Undine," of the "Wildschütz," and other charming things—does the good and famous Lorzing deserve a less friendly welcome?' was the answer.

'Ah, you know my works? then you know me

too!' cried Lorzing, a beaming smile passing over his features. For the moment his temples were not sunken, and his cheeks lost their pallor. The ice of his timid reserve melted away before the warm glances of his new friend, before the pressure of his hand, and as music, such as he had never before heard, sounded from afar, a history, simple and humble as himself, glided from his lips—a touching confession, a long and thorny wreath of wants and sorrows, mortifications and tears, one of those old, yet ever new, minor variations on a favourite theme: 'Res severa est verum gaudium.' Here and there a pale little blossom of joy was bound up among all those piercing sorrows, and the oppressed heart of the speaker lingered upon it with touching delight, while he rapidly passed over his troubles as though they had been brief and transient. His simple history was the outpouring of a reserved, child-like heart, which, amid the blows and buffets of a stern, unjust destiny, had clung firmly to *one* support—to God. This heart had honestly struggled and hoped when others had long succumbed to so weary an existence, had retained its faith in man when others had scoffed in bitter despair, had loved and served Music when others had lost courage to love or serve. The image of St. Cecilia had not preserved the vessel from storms and sunken rocks, despite the sailor's prayful supplications, and so, after thirty-eight years passed upon the stormy ocean of life, he had been cast upon a dreary sand bank, where he found sustenance sufficient to seecure from starvation himself and his loved ones—his wife and children, for whom he would gladly have sacrificed his heart's blood a thousand times. 'They call me Capellmeister,'

he concluded, with a sorrowful smile, 'therefore I must no longer complain!'

'Generous soul!' cried the other, with some strange contortions of countenance, intended to conceal deep emotion, 'you have had much patience, but now you have no further need of it. The words "Want and Sorrow" were inscribed in large letters within the volume of my varied life; but I would not learn to read those words, and resisted them to the last. All my struggles were unavailing, yet our burdens are lightened by striking around us, not passively submitting to the strokes of others. Bamberg, Leipzic, and Dresden will never be forgotten by me, there my bed was not made of roses, and my opera, my "Undine," of which I was so proud, was born amid a thousand sorrows. My present state is entirely free from care, that I will gladly confess'—here came again that strange mysterious smile—'and I cannot deny myself the pleasure of seeking, amid the wide-spread fraternity of musicians, some noble, grief-stricken heart which may receive comfort and assistance from me. New Year's Eve is my favourite time for such pursuits, for then the hearts are less reserved, the lips more ready to speak than at other times. For you, my brother, my heart has long been moved to pity, and now I rejoice that I have found you and spoken to you. I know of a better appointment for you. I may not yet tell you where; but you will be content. You will find colleagues who will not treat you and your honest ways with contempt, and orchestras such as you have never conducted, in spite of Leipzic, Vienna, and Berlin. Have you the will and the courage to throw the whole affair overboard, and soon to enter upon your new duties?'

'If at the same time I can benefit those I love, then, in God's name, the sooner the better!'

'Give your hand upon it, and drink to me! A happy New Year, brother-heart!'

The first stroke of midnight sounded from the clock-towers of Berlin as the glasses clashed against each other, and Lorzing's glass broke. He started, for well-known loving voices were crying, 'A happy New Year,' and his wife and children surrounded him. He rubbed his eyes in amazement, for he was sitting in his cold work-room, the lamp burned feebly, and its light was nearly spent; Lorzing's dream was ended.

But the fragments of a tall, strangely-shaped glass stood beside the open "Lichte Stunden eines Wahnsinnigen Musikers"—a glass which he remembered to have seen on the table at the wine shop; and in deep emotion he laid by the fragments, remembering his dream.

Did Capellmeister Kreisler keep his word?

Yes, for twenty days after that solemn promise came a yet more solemn call. On the 20th January, 1851, Albert Lorzing, smilingly and without complaint, entered heaven, there to talk with Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, and countless other well-known and beloved musicians of our poor little world, which, up to the present day, has seldom rewarded the poor musician, save by that posthumous fame of which he can know nothing—to tell them of that earth which has but one peaceful resting-place for her most noble sons—the grave!

DOMENICO CIMAROSA.

MANY years had passed since the celebrated Opera House at Vienna had contained so crowded an audience as on the night of the 29th November, 1791. Not only were boxes and stalls filled with all who could lay claim to rank, wealth, or beauty, but many a less favoured member of society had, however great the sacrifice, laid his offering upon the altar of art, for the pit and the upper galleries were crowded to excess. Lovely features, and foreheads bearing the protecting seal impressed upon them by the spirit of happiness, and pale countenances, with deep furrows drawn by the hand of care, costly garments of silk, gauze, and satin, scanty, well-worn clothing, the most *récherché* perfumed elegance, homely townsfolk, and humble poor, caused the great theatre to present a picturesque, if somewhat melancholy scene. It was whispered that the Emperor Leopold had promised to be present with his glittering suite, and the eyes of the audience were fixed now upon the stage curtain, now upon the velvet hangings of the Imperial box. What attraction, what work of art had gathered together such crowds, both of rich and poor? Why this extraordinary excitement and expectation, plainly expressed by all gestures, by all faces?

A new opera was to be performed, the work of a foreign composer named Cimarosa, whom the Emperor had summoned from Italy and appointed Capellmeister. The new work about to be performed was called, 'Il Matrimonio Segreto,' the secret marriage, and it was said at court that the composer could claim

to be the greatest of living composers, greater than the Mozart of Vienna. The citizens could not and would not believe that an Italian could rival so universal a favourite, and were impatient to hear and judge for themselves. They knew and honoured their music-heroes—the name of the great Gluck was borne upon their breasts like an order of knighthood, Haydn was carried as a costly hand-bouquet, but their dear, happy Mozart had sunk deep and fast into their hearts, like a first love; where could a place for a stranger be found?

The Emperor appeared, the fresh, bright music of the overture floated and sounded through the house, the curtain rose. As the pretty Carolina appeared upon the scene, with the husband to whom she had been secretly united, as they sang the charming duet, 'Cara, caro, non dubitar,' so full of tenderness and roguery, many a listener, strange to say, forgot his evil thoughts, many a gloomy forehead grew lighter. But when the music, rippling onward like a clear streamlet, introduced that comical, conceited boaster, Papa Geromio, who in the splendid aria, 'Udite, tutte udite,' proclaimed to the world his satisfaction with the noble bridegroom intended for his daughter, when the enamoured Aunt Fidalma, 'ma con un marito, via meglio si sta,' the saucy Elisetta, who longed to become a countess, and the jovial conte made their appearance, a ray as of sunshine passed over the countenances of the listeners, many lips smiled which for years had remained stern and grave, many an opinionated Mozart-worshipper pressed the hand of his companion, silently, but in evident satisfaction.

It seemed to all that they had listened to some Mozart master-piece.

No countenance reflected so plainly the bright, entrancing gracefulness of the music as the countenance of a little man dressed in grey, who sat quite in the corner of a stage-box, following every aria, every chorus, every tone, with almost enthusiastic attention. He sang and acted with the performers, but only by and through his wonderful eyes. When the opera was concluded, and the Emperor himself had given the signal for an applause which seemed as though it could never be hushed, no one clapped more vigourously, more joyfully than the pale-faced listener in the stage-box. At last the Emperor and his suite retired, the audience walked or drove homewards, and as the most enthusiastic musicians sought their homes, they said one to another, 'Truly this Italian deserves to be a younger brother of our Wolfgang Amadeus.'

Cimarosa himself was one of the last to leave the building. Wearied and half bewildered by the events of the evening, he was slowly sauntering towards the entrance, when, as he passed along a corridor, dimly lighted by a half-extinguished lamp, two arms were suddenly thrown around him, and a tender, eager kiss was pressed upon his lips—the little man of the stage-box was hanging upon his neck. The Italian gently disengaged himself, and in broken German attempted an inquiry whether some mistake had not been made.

'No,' was the laughing reply; 'that kiss was intended for your music; but as, unfortunately, I could not kiss it, you were embraced in its stead. I, too, am a bit of a musician, and it seemed to me as if that warm, cheerful music had been composed by myself, it is written out of my very soul!'

'What is your name?' asked the new Capellmeister, dragging the little grey man out into the street and under the nearest lamp, which revealed the stranger's pale features and a pair of wonderful eyes.

'More of that presently,' was the answer. 'Now let us seek the nearest inn, where, over a glass of mulled wine, you must relate to me the history of your "Matrimonio Segreto."'

And humming the first words of the conte's song, 'Senza, senza, cerimonie,' he led the way to a brightly-lighted house. Before ten minutes had passed, the two men, who a few hours before had never seen each other, were sitting hand in hand in a comfortable little room, and on the table before them steamed a mighty bowl of punch.

As they sat there, laughing, drinking, and growing more and more excited, a casual observer would have held them to be brothers. Each had a fine open countenance, a noble forehead, a well-formed mouth, and carefully powdered hair. They were of almost equal height, and both were extremely vivacious. The difference lay in the eyes; Cimarosa's black eyes recalled recollections of the nights of his native country —the same glow, the same remarkable clearness, the same irresistible charm. The eyes of the little grey man were blue. From the earliest ages God has from time to time, to comfort fallen man, created eyes which, when we see them, act upon our hearts as the rays of the sun upon the statue of Memnon—that is, they rouse and bring to light all that is warm, good, and noble within us. And our hearts rejoice and sing as never before, we feel ourselves rich and happy. Blessed is the child of man on whom heaven has

bestowed such eyes; happy the mortal who may gaze upon them! The little grey man had wonderful eyes such as these.

Cimarosa was soon deep in the history of his life, his heart overflowed in the presence of this man, whose very name was unknown to him; he concealed nothing, and the longer he talked the more fluently did he speak, the more light-hearted did he grow. We will repeat, with all possible brevity, the substance of his narrative, given in a curious mixture of Italian, French, and German.

Who could have imagined that in the sparkling 'Matrimonio Segreto,' that true opera bouffe, lies concealed one of the most painful recollections of the composer's youth, that it speaks a name written upon his heart in letters of blood? The bright charming music is spread over it like fresh roses over—a grave!

Domenico Cimarosa, the son of a poor Neapolitan shoemaker, was born in the year 1753. His childhood passed gently and pleasantly, despite the numerous privations consequent upon poverty; a mother's faithful eyes watched over his young life, and his lovely native land does not reserve for the wealthy alone her laughing skies, her golden fruits, her long spring, and her brief winter. Not until his tender parent was sleeping her last, long sleep did a time of hardships arrive for Domenico. Cimarosa had intended his son to follow his own trade, but the boy was so unusually awkward and careless in his pursuit of the shoemaking art that in his fourteenth year he was apprenticed to a wealthy baker. Domenico, being a remarkably handsome boy, his avaricious master, Geromio, at first employed him only as a street

vendor of cakes, his attractive countenance drawing numerous purchasers, especially of the fair sex. But as he stopped to listen to every barrel-organ or guitar, and ran after every street-singer and fiddler, deserting both his wares and his customers, his occupation was changed, and he was employed in the shop. He afterwards served his master's most distinguished customers, who lived in the neighbourhood, with their morning provision of choice pastry. It did not escape the master's attention that his apprentice remained absent unusually long, but as the goods were always correctly delivered, as proved by the sums brought by Domenico, he said not a word, but resolved to spy out the movements of his pupil.

One morning in February, the month in which the Italian spring reveals her full charms, the fat baker, panting and with a sour countenance, crept after his fleet-footed apprentice. Domenico turned down the nearest street, delivered up his basket to a tall, ragged youth who stood in waiting, and cried, 'There, Giacomo, sell it quickly and bring back the money!' at the same time bestowing upon him his own breakfast. Giacomo hastened away, while Domenico sprang up the steps of the nearest, somewhat projecting house, and disappeared. The baker followed, purple with rage, and even as he stood upon the threshold he heard the silvery tones of a young girl's voice.

'Who lives here?' he inquired, with painfully assumed composure, of a lazzarone who leant against the entrance.

'Signor Aprile, the celebrated singer!' was the answer.

And so it proved. The favourite and pride of

Naples, the charming singer, Giuseppe Aprile was at this—for an Italian—early hour, instructing a young and wealthy maiden, whose love for music was so great as to induce her, at this time, and in the company of her aunt, the elderly Countess Fidalma, to leave her lovely villa at the south gate of the city, and daily to study the art of singing under this most celebrated musician and well-known teacher. The young contessa was scarcely fourteen years of age, half bud, half blossom, wondrously beautiful and of a happy disposition. She was an orphan, and had apparently the complete control of her fortune, for she was besieged by admirers of all ranks, but laughingly fluttered past them. One of her distant relatives, a stiff young conte, who claimed descent from the most ancient Italian nobility, could alone boast of the distinction of spending a few moments each day in the presence of the lovely Carolina, which time was conscientiously devoted by him to the occupations of kissing her hand, and presenting her with an enormous bouquet. Even those few moments spent in his company seemed an eternity to the youthful countess, for she was always unwilling to be disturbed in the games and pastimes which she shared with Elisetta, her pretty little cameriera. She wandered about the gardens with her attendant, and in the evening she sometimes ventured into the streets in various disguises, of course only in the company of her friends and attended by a servant; yet she was timid as a child if only in the distance she heard the tones of a rough voice. Aunt Fidalma never opposed her favourite's will, laughed at all Carolina's pranks and wild doings, considered all her actions charming and

original, and said that she would soon grow sober and become tired of her wildness. The countess was ever ready to receive the various gallants, who were unwearying in their endeavours to soften the heart of the wilful girl; and still found time to think of her own future. It was certainly no fault of hers that one or other of the numerous suitors had not long ago led her to the altar, there to speak that sweet, binding, 'Yes.'

Carolina loved her aunt as she loved every one who did not interfere with her, she was not disagreeable to her; but one person alone had some authority over the indulged girl, her master Aprile.

Domenico Cimarosa's chief delight during the last four months had been to hear the voice of that loveliest of women as she sang, trilled, and practised solfeggios. He would kneel upon the highest stair, his head tightly pressed against the door-post, and his ear against the door, remaining motionless until the teacher pushed away his chair as he rose to take leave of his pupil. He then sprang up, rushed down the stairs into the street, and, concealed by a projecting pillar, waited until the countesses' carriage drove up and stopped at the door; the rustle of the blue silk skirt was heard, the tiny foot in its black satin slipper rested a moment upon the step of the carriage, and the lovely countenance, flushed with excitement, was once more turned towards the master's windows. The carriage drove off, and Domenico sauntered dreamily to the corner of the street, where Giacomo was patiently awaiting his arrival, dreamily took the basket and the money, which he forgot to count, and so returned to his master's shop.

But on this February morning the poor fellow did not get so far, for Geromio saw not why his punishment should be so long delayed. He crept up the stairs with all the caution of a thievish cat, and no sooner did he espy his kneeling apprentice than he sprang upon him like a madman, striking him such a blow that the unfortunate youth fell with his full weight against the door, which gave way and precipitated him to the very feet of the Countess Carolina. How strange was the scene which ensued, laying the foundation of the youth's musical career. Aprile, standing erect, displeasure in his noble countenance; Contessa Fidalma, after a piercing shriek, sinking back fainting in the great arm-chair (not without previously casting a searching glance upon the folds of her yellow damask dress); Carolina, rather pale, but kindly raising the handsome boy who now knelt before her; Geromio's broad shoulders and features distorted with passion forming an effective background. And Aprile could not resist the persuasive eloquence of the baker's apprentice, as he spoke with true enthusiasm of the mighty longing of his heart, the longing to become a musician, as he promised to serve the Maëstro day and night if he might sometimes be allowed to hear music. After a brief whispered conversation with his pupil, Aprile in due form bought off the young baker from his apprenticeship. Carolina blushed crimson as the boy kissed her hand with all the gallantry of a courtier, and Fidalma, who now thought proper to regain consciousness, confessed to herself in much astonishment that never before had she seen her niece change colour on such an occasion.

A few days after this important event, Aprile had

already discovered in his new servant so unusual a talent for music that he obtained his admission into the Conservatorio della Pietà, and from henceforward he never lost sight of his protégé. Now began a blissful, never-forgotten time for Domenico; he could learn, hear, and study, and rejoiced in the new delights of drawing water from the true fountain of his life. He soon distinguished himself not only as the most industrious, but also as the most talented among the pupils, and made immense progress. His leisure hours were passed, now at the house of his patron Aprile, now with the lovely promoter of his fortune, and so frequently did he receive invitations from the two countesses that soon every evening found him a guest at their pretty country house beyond the south gate. The young countess always required the most minute particulars of his studies, and of all that he had heard, and when he spoke of the rules of counterpoint, or of the method of instruction pursued by his revered master Sacchini, how delightfully she listened, how charmingly naïve were her questions!

She usually received her young friend under a kind of verandah near the house. As, arrayed in a long, light-coloured silk dress, a white veil thrown over her head, flowers in her black tresses, and flowers at her breast, she sat beneath the luxuriant vines and curious creeping plants, she might have been some good fairy, brought to life from an old fairy-tale. And she was a fairy to Domenico, for through her had the warmest desire of his heart been fulfilled, and his gratitude was such that he would gladly have knelt before her for ever. As this, however, was impossible, he contented himself with a daily pilgrimage to the abode

of his patron saint, where he fervently kissed the hand from which he had received so many benefits. And Carolina? She blushed when he came, and trembled when he departed; the book of love lay open before them, and together they read the preface. Two years passed, and still the young people were unconsciously reading the first page, no word of ten-tenderness had passed their lips, which could have revealed in all its splendour the Paradise of love. Neither could they think of the future; they felt only the bright to-day, and had no care for the morrow.

Matters stood thus when, at the close of a lesson, Aprile remarked to his pupil,—

'Yesterday I again received the most brilliant accounts of my favourite Cimarosa; stern old Sacchini called him a star which may one day become a sun. Such praise does indeed delight me; I think that with the aid of some unhappy attachment, some hopeless love, the budding flower would gloriously and rapidly unfold itself, for every truly great musician has been made great by *pain*.'

'An unhappy attachment?' and Carolina grew pale, 'why not a happy one?'

'Mortals are weakened by happiness; we cannot endure perpetual sunshine, we fade.'

'Do you understand by "hopeless love" the *death* of the beloved?'

'Something far more tragic, dear countess—her marriage!'

On the following evening, Carolina, under some pretext, dismissed her maid, and sat trembling and colouring as she tried to listen to her friend's conversation.

'I am wearying you to-day!' said Domenico, as he sorrowfully gazed into the eyes of the lovely girl.

She blushed crimson as she took his hand, then turned away from him, and whispered,—

'Tell me one word; by the soul of your mother I conjure you to speak truth! *Do you love me?*'

A half-stifled cry was the answer; she felt herself folded in Domenico's arms, she saw his noble countenance expressing delight, which gave, more plainly than words could have spoken, the reply for which her heart had longed. Before Domenico could speak she had torn herself from his embrace and disappeared. Elisetta brought to the delighted Domenico a message from her mistress, that she should not expect him again until three days had passed. Elisetta also put into his hand a little note, which contained only these words,—

'You have told me that which I will carry even into eternity. I will reward you with *pain*, but you must not be angry with me, for I love you!

'CAROLINA.'

At the appointed hour Domenico once more entered the Eden of his pure happiness; his heart seemed weighed down by a presentiment of great sorrow. The garden was illuminated, the sound of music and merry voices was heard, and Domenico trembled as he entered the dark bosquet which led to the verandah. Two soft arms were clasped around him, a well-known voice, half-choked with tears, whispered,—

'Domenico, forgive! *Happy* love does but weaken, says Aprile; you must not be weakened, for greatness,

fame, and glory must be yours. You need pain, bitter pain, and from my hand alone shall you receive it. Listen—an hour ago I became the wife of another!'

A burning kiss was pressed upon Cimarosa's lips, hot tears fell upon his face — and he was alone. Through the branches of the cypresses and yew-trees he could distinguish the retreating form of the lovely Carolina; the full light fell upon her dress of rich white satin, and upon her garland of orange blossoms, as a man approached and offered his arm—it was the happy Marito, the formal conte of the huge bouquet.

On the following day Cimarosa left Naples. In compliance with the advice of his master and of the fatherly Sacchini, to whom he had confided the sorrows of his young heart, he entered the Conservatorium of Loretta, where he studied with redoubled energy, feeding upon the wise teachings of the Durante school. Aprile's prophecy was fulfilled, for now his favourite spread his mighty wings, which carried him higher and ever higher above the sorrows and thorns of life. He soon produced an opera, 'Il Sacrifizio di Abramo,' which attracted the attention of all eminent composers and musicians. Urged onwards, now by the ever-waking sorrow of his heart, now by the universal approbation which rewarded his labours, he composed in rapid succession several important works, such as 'Olympia,' 'Il Pittore di Parigino,' and 'L'Italiano in Londra,' which excited attention throughout Italy, and were even performed in Germany. A summons to Florence now insured for the composer a life as free from care as it was full of honour. The wounds of his heart were gradually healing, soothing him to gentle slumber; how could

regret for a woman's love continue in that fiery mind, so full of ever-varying, endless melody.

Three years were passed in Florence, and at the end of that time Cimarosa obeyed a summons to St. Petersburg. But irresistible longings for home were the result of the northern climate and of the northern hearts, and in 1791 Cimarosa once more returned to Italy. At Florence he received intelligence of the death of his beloved, the beautiful Countess Marito. She had died, they said, of heart disease, and her body had been found under the verandah which had so often witnessed the purest delights of love. The evening before her death she had been admired in the theatre, where Cimarosa's 'L'Amor Costante' had been performed for the first time, amid enthusiastic applause.

The musician could now no longer bear to remain in the land of love and song; he complied with the wishes of the Emperor Leopold and set out for Vienna. Even then musical Germany was ringing with his praises, and indeed among the German composers of those fortunate times there was one only—Mozart—who possessed so inexhaustible a treasure of those beautiful, charming melodies which are, in the Italian phrase, 'di prima intenzione.' The truly astonishing profusion of his musical ideas called forth the well-known saying, that a single *finale* of Cimarosa's contains material sufficient for a whole opera. Cimarosa's great productiveness was as remarkable as his genius; he composed no fewer than forty operas, the 'Matrimonio Segreto' being reckoned the finest among them. In this work he laid down, with the significant name of Carolina, at once the sweetest and most bitter

reminiscence of his youthful days, and the opera ever remained his favourite. He brought the new opera buffa to Vienna for the Emperor, who caused it to be performed twice in one evening, so delighted was he with the work. A description of the first performance has already been given at the beginning of this sketch.

'This was my life,' added the Italian, at the close of his simple narrative; 'I have told you all, as I have never told it to man. Now I am here, in Vienna, but I have yet *one* heart-felt desire which, as yet, has found no fulfilment—I must see the great Mozart! Three times have I knocked at the door of his humble dwelling, but in vain; I was told that he was ill. There is no peace, no rest for me until I have seen him, and told how my heart longs for him. We are of the same kindred, with pride I feel it; we are striving for one goal, although he soars on angel's wings while I am but carried by the pinions of a bird.'

The other made no answer, but stretched out his hand to the speaker, while the wonderful eyes gazed upon him with so strange an expression that Cimarosa sprang up, crying, in deep excitement,—

'Who are you? You must be something great, for beneath your gaze I feel half glad, half terrified. Tell me your name!'

And the little grey man smiled as he replied, 'I have composed the Don Juan music, if you know that!'

On the 5th December, 1791, eight days after this meeting of two kindred souls, Mozart's glorious soul soared so high upon its angel pinions that it could not again return to our earth.

Mozart's death was a deep wound to the heart of the Italian musician who had scarely known him; Vienna became a lonely and uneasy abode to Cimarosa, and life seemed more heavy, more gloomy than before. Like a captive bird which has not yet become accustomed to its cage, he spent a few years in fluttering around the Imperial city, which loved and honoured him as it has seldom loved and honoured a stranger. But when in 1795 his noble patron, the Emperor Leopold, closed his eyes in death, Cimarosa forsook Vienna and mournfully returned to Italy. He went straight to Naples, attracted to his native town, to the grave of his warm first love. The revolution broke out in Naples two days after his arrival—was it surprising that this glowing, sorrowful heart should seek relief in the wild tumult, should cast itself into the torrent? Cimarosa was carried away by the stream, and when at length he regained consciousness, it was to find himself a prisoner, convicted of high treason. His fame alone turned aside the sword which hung over his head; his sentence of death was, by the Emperor's clemency, commuted to a sentence of perpetual imprisonment. In spite of the most earnest appeals, in spite of the murmurs of half the world, he disappeared, and the door of his cell was closed behind him.

Six years had passed, when, on the 11th January, 1801, it was announced that a new opera would be performed that evening at the Venetian theatre of La Fenice. The composer of this opera, which bore the title 'Semiramide,' was not named, but a few mysterious words and dark hints were sufficient to draw

immense crowds. Soldiers and policemen were posted everywhere; deep silence reigned in the great theatre, and every one seemed to expect some unusual event. A side-door of the orchestra was now slowly opened, and the long-lost Domenico Cimarosa appeared, half-carried by his attendants. He was greeted by one cry from countless lips, a shout of delight and of gratitude. The air resounded with his name; the people pressed around him to kiss his hands, to touch his garments, cast flowers upon him, waved handkerchiefs, laughed and cried at once; in short, it was a wonderful scene. And in answer to this wild enthusiasm, the pale, feeble, broken man smiled, and bowed his head to all sides; he then took the bâton, and once more drawing himself up in kingly dignity, conducted his new work, the opera 'Semiramis.' His eyes sparkled, all the power, all the life of former years seemed restored to him in that hour. The opera was a brilliant success, but at the close of the performance the conductor fell fainting from his desk.

Whence this sudden reappearance? The king had mercifully granted a last request of the prisoner, who, knowing that his strength was fast failing him, had earnestly besought permission once more to conduct one of his own works.

In the night which followed this triumph, Domenico Cimarosa, with a joyful smile, took leave of earth, his soul finding eternal union with his beloved Mozart, while with his last sigh he whispered the name of Carolina.

THE BUTTERFLY'S RIVALS.

A BUTTERFLY—is it not a charming creature? a glittering picture of merry thoughtlessness, a beautiful example of sweetest enjoyment of life, a restless advocate of free and unfettered affection. The first breath of spring calls him into existence, and if he finds no flowers, still he rejoices in the bright sun, bathes himself in its beams, and waits patiently until the dangerous blue or variegated eyes are opened invitingly, until a sweet perfume arises from a thousand blossoms, seeming to whisper, 'Come, come, we have richer sweets in store!' He obeys the enticing call, and flutters from delight to delight, delaying now here, now there; now he is embraced by the white arms of the slender lily, now the beautiful rose has bound him in her chains, the little forget-me-not enjoys a chat, the roguish convolvulus loves a teasing game, wickedly closing her doors against him when, towards noon, he seeks rest or food. Everywhere he can find the most delicious repasts, the most refreshing of drinks, shelter and protection from sun, rain, and storm, his raiment is always fresh and glittering, and death overtakes him suddenly, in the midst of enjoyment, even as lightning cleaves the air.

'Who, in this wide world, is so happy as that rogue, the careless butterfly?' asked the flowers, as they whispered together under the May moon, one lovely evening. They envied the merry tribe of butterflies, and grew discontented as they spoke of their own short season of blossoming, their murmurs grew louder and louder, until at length they spoke of the injustice

of the flower-angel, and discovered the gay butterfly to be simply disgusting. They complained of his importunities and frivolity, related all kinds of histories respecting his manners and his evil habits of life, until at length they could not find anything too bad to say of the light-winged butterfly in his gay jacket.

'It is quite unbearable!' said the Jasmine; 'he requires to be kissed half the day long, while the whole time he is, as I well know, casting sidelong glances upon my nearest neighbour, the Primula, and nodding familiarly to the little coquette!'

'His conversation is most frivolous,' whispered the Rose; 'he boasts of his innumerable loves, until I am obliged to send away my bud-children when I see him in the distance.'

'He scarcely touches me with his lips,' angrily interrupted a flaming Tulip; 'I could never succeed in keeping him ever so short a time within my doors, yet I am handsome, even if I do not understand your complicated scent language.'

'The careless rogue leads an easy life,' added the Poppy, bitterly; 'he has neither house nor barn, and we flowers are bound to provide for him; but what reward does he give for our sacrifices? He eats and drinks like a flower-king, and seems to imagine that we require no higher recompense than his kisses. I care not a grain of dust for a butterfly's kiss!'

'Well, he knows how to kiss, that must be allowed!' said the Forget-me-not, softly; 'for my part, I would gladly give my last dew-drop in return for that tender, sweet caress.'

'And no one dares complain of his greediness!'

cried the Mignonette; 'he cannot eat and drink, he does but sip and nibble.'

'It is splendid to be loved,' said the Carnation, thoughtfully, 'but not by such frivolous creatures. Affection shared by others is valueless to me; if he loved me alone I could know nought sweeter than to be caressed by him.'

'I cannot understand how the flower-angel could give us such worthless fellows as companions!' cried the Iris.

'It is most unjustifiable,' murmured the flowers in chorus.

'I have been strictly forbidden by Father Drone to hold any further communication with Master Butterfly,' confessed the Evening Primrose.

'The wretch is endangering our souls and injuring our spotless reputation,' whispered the Lily.

As she spoke, the flower-angel, with his beaming countenance, stood among them, bearing his golden bowl of dew.

'Choose another companion, my children,' he said, gently. 'I have heard your complaints and am ready to help you; I will take away the wicked butterfly. Tell me—speak without fear—what qualities shall I bestow upon your new cavalier?'

'He must be larger and heavier!' cried the bold Tulip, quickly; 'he must not fly too lightly.'

'He must wear a black waistcoat, like Father Drone,' lisped the Evening Primrose.

'And he must love sleep!' added the Poppy.

'He must wear modest colours, so that he may not excite the curiosity of the neighbourhood when he comes to visit me,' said the Rose.

'His voice must be deep and low,' said the Lily.

'He must not live on kisses alone, but on more solid fare,' cried the fat Peony.

'Your wishes shall be fulfilled!' answered the beautiful angel; 'make ready your houses, for the morning sun will bring your new guest.'

He then distributed the evening dew, and disappeared like a ray of light.

The flowers' excitement had been so great that not an eye had been closed, when on the morrow the sun arose in full splendour and glory. The blue heavens beamed upon the earth, which smiled like a happy child, and the flowers were thinking that they had never seen so lovely a May morning, when suddenly the still air was filled with the noise of buzzing and humming, and a multitude of enormous cockchafers fell as if from the skies. They wore dark brown coats and neat black vests, and immediately rushed upon the terrified flowers.

'Welcome, my lovely favourite!' growled one, as he fell heavily upon the tulip.

'Come, kiss me!' buzzed another, seizing a rose; 'our neighbours will not see us!'

'Ho, there! bring honey and dew!' cried two others, clutching the dress of a peony, which immediately tore.

'Where is dear Father Drone, our friend?' was tenderly inquired of the Evening Primrose, who sank down fainting beneath the embrace.

'I like you; we will be married!' said one of the fattest chafers to the Lily, as he dragged her about by her white sleeve; 'but give me plenty to eat, little bride, that's the most important thing!'

'We are sleepy,' cried several in one voice, as they roughly shook a young poppy; 'prepare your softest couches, and make haste.'

And they rushed upon the blossoms, selected the softest cushions, and made wild confusion everywhere, until at length they fell into a heavy sleep. Lamentations arose from all the flowers, heavy sighs were heard, horror and confusion fell upon all blossoms. Every hour brought new woes, new torments, until the long, weary day, so full of bitter sorrow, died away. With evening came the beautiful angel, his tender hands bearing the sweetly perfumed cup of dew. Oh, how piteous was the scene which he beheld! Many flowers lay fainting upon the ground, others, in much confusion, sought to conceal the rents of their clothing; the rose was almost destroyed, the tulip's lamps had been extinguished, thrown down and trodden under foot, all was covered with thick, black dust.

How thirsty were they all! The chafers were sleeping hard and fast, they had consumed the very last morsel of honey, the last drop of dew, and even then were scarcely satisfied. When the flower angel appeared, tears stood in all the beautiful eyes, tears of deep, heart-felt repentance, of mute yet earnest entreaty. Not one ventured to speak, for all were aware of their ingratitude, and meekly and silently bore their heavy punishment. The beautiful, once despised butterfly was remembered with deep sorrow, and earnestly longed for, but nowhere could he be seen. When the soft-hearted angel beheld his favourite white lily, her head bowed even to the earth in weakness and longing, he was moved to pity, and graciously smiled upon the repentant blossoms.

'I forgive you,' he said, 'and will no longer remember your transgression. The friend whom you despised shall be restored to you; but as a punishment, as an eternal remembrance of your ingratitude in doubting my love and the wisdom of our Almighty Father, the brown cockchafers shall retain the solemn right of embracing you every year in the month of May.'

And the fat brown chafers are not slow to avail themselves of the gracious permission, to the bitter sorrow of the lovely flowers and to the great indignation of the merry butterflies.

THE LAST ROSE.

Vom Himmel ist er gekommen,
Auf der Erde hat er gelebt,
Unser Herz ist sein Grab.

IN the beautiful, highly favoured land of Bavaria, at the foot of the wild, picturesque Fichtelgebirge, lies a little town named Wunsiedel. The scenery is grand and solemn, the tall trees are arrayed in dark foliage and seldom does the bright warm hue of a flower meet our eyes. Caves with long, intricate passages, and deep, horrible precipices are concealed in those dark mountains, and the shy forest birds who dwell in those parts relate strange stories of buried treasure, and secret, dazzling fairy grottos. It is late ere lovely spring crosses that lofty mountain ridge, and playfully scatters around the last remnants of his gifts, bright sunshine and sweet nosegays. Summer, with his

glowing cheeks, hastens onwards as though he feared to lose his way amid the impenetrable fir and pine forests, but capricious autumn seems well pleased, his winds sport, unfettered and unrestrained, among the rocks and valleys, whirling the many-coloured leaves through the mazes of a fantastic dance, scornfully shaking from the trees the scanty fruits which summer has forgotten to colour, and industriously scattering upon the cottagers' gardens the red, blue, yellow and white asters, which in his leisure hours he has carefully and artistically formed of half-faded summer flowers. These sports, however, are soon interrupted by cold winter, who erects his splendid ice palace, arrays the mountains in glittering white livery, making them to appear his servants, spreads a snowy veil over the trees, and a great, soft, dazzling carpet over the whole earth. He breathes upon the window-panes, creating strange soulless flowers, he scatters with an unsparing hand glittering diamonds which sparkle and glare in the light of the sun or moon, until no human eye can longer endure to gaze upon them. His well-sharpened daggers, the icicles, gleam brightly, threatening with wounds and pain those who dare to resist or scoff at the icy glory, might, and majesty of the proud sovereign, or long for the return of the mild, sweet spring.

In the beginning of March, 1763, however, the despotic ruler lifted up his white coverings in unusual haste, tore the ice flowers from the window panes, broke his threatening daggers, packed up the mantles of the trees, and left the valley before a single human being could awake from his surprise at so unheard-of an occurrence. And on the morning of the 21st

March a heavenly, smiling face looked down upon the delivered land—the face of spring; a warm, pleasant breeze was felt, and gentle drops of rain fell upon the hitherto breathless, frozen earth, which now awoke, trembling with delight, and once more ventured to breathe. Tender, bright green leaves appeared, called forth by magic, irresistible power, the violets were awakened by the hot sun's glowing kiss, and unclosed their eyes, wondering that the dark night had passed so soon. Here and there a bird, rejoicing in his new life, raised his timid song of thanksgiving, and strange murmurs arose from the mountains. The hearts of the wondering human beings who heard and saw all these delights were filled with the blissful assurance of a heavenly, mysterious gift, a consoling promise; it seemed as if their wounds had been healed by a gentle loving touch, as if spring could never more depart from the quiet valley.

A narrow, insignificant plot of garden lay before one of the smallest, poorest houses of the village; this garden could boast but of one beauty, an old rose-tree, whose head was nestled lovingly and confidingly against the low window of a gloomy room. Within that room he could often hear the merry games of a rosy-cheeked troop of children; but how often, too, did he listen to the sigh of a care-worn father! how often did he watch the silent tears of an anxious mother! And on the morning of the 21st March, the sweet breath of spring, the refreshing dew, and the warm, reviving sunlight fell with especial tenderness upon this rose-bush, which had so seldom blossomed in the rough mountain air. A rose-bud struggled forth so hastily that the green leaves had some difficulty in

following; it swelled with remarkable rapidity, soon it was tinged with red, and its perfume filled the air, as, a lovely half-opened rose, it timidly tapped against the window.

What a scene of joy did it behold! Around the cradle of a new-born brother stood a group of delighted children, the father seemed so grateful and happy, and the pale mother folded her hands, smiling joyfully as she lay upon the bed. The child of earth was sleeping peacefully, the rough, confused sounds which were heard around could not penetrate to that innocent soul, and were powerless to rouse him. Yet now the infant eyes were suddenly opened—had the child heard and understood the rosebud's gentle knock? The clear blue eyes were turned towards the window, and all eyes followed that beaming gaze. One cry of delighted, glad surprise, and the happy children rushed noisily from the room; the wonder was revealed, the rose discovered.

And in the following night the little room was filled with light and with sweet music, while the perfume of the rose was breathed in through the open window. And the lovely forms of bright angels, visible alone to the pure and unclouded infant eyes, kept watch around the cradle, playing with the happy child, and crowning it with the flowers of heaven, blossoms glowing with light, and resembling the roses of our earth, but without their thorns. A lovely angel kissed the child's forehead and sang,—

'Our Almighty Father has sent me, oh, favourite, chosen one among mortals; listen to the lofty message which my lips will proclaim. Our Father looked upon His little earth, and upon the restless men which

inhabit it; He looked with pity upon the longings of their hearts, upon their brief springs and joys, upon their long and wintry nights of sorrow; and His fatherly eyes saw how oft their hope and courage failed, saw their trembling faith and patience, and the God who with impartial love directs, rules, and blesses His countless worlds, sent unto this little earth a warm sunbeam, a new, sweet comforter, a bright flower which should tell of His love—He sent a happy child, He sent *thee* to all weary, all joyful hearts, to proclaim His love and tell of His bright heaven, that the weary ones may learn to believe, to hope, and to love, and that the joyful may never grow sad. Thine eyes will pierce the deepest depths of man's heart, the hidden treasures of the soul will be revealed to thee, the joys of men will be understood by thee, as never man has understood them. Thou shalt discover the most insignificant flower blossoming in the most secret corner of the heart, thou shalt have a smile for every joy, a word of sympathy with every delight. But thou shalt also know mortal griefs, as never man before or after thee, every sorrow will be unveiled before thee, and from thy lips will flow a healing balsam for all pain, for all sorrow, for all the woes of man.'

A second radiant form bent over the child and whispered,—

'To thee alone it is granted to read and understand the wondrous, eternal book of nature, those glorious pages contain no mysteries for thee; the souls of the tender flowers will be opened, and thy heart will understand their mysterious scent language, all tones will converse with thee. The mighty stars

will speak unto thee, the earth will open, revealing her undying flowers, the glittering diamonds, the beaming sapphires and emeralds, the glowing rubies, the noble trees of gold and silver—yea, even the mysteries of the ocean depths are thine. And, rejoicing in thine inexhaustible riches, thou wilt reveal them to men, showering thy treasures upon them that thou mayest rejoice and enrich them even as thy Heavenly Father hath enriched thee!'

'The sweet, heavenly rose of love shall ever blossom within thy heart!'—whispered the gentle voice of another angel; 'its beauty and its perfume will smooth the stony path which it is appointed thee to tread. Our Father guides and protects thee.'

At length a heavenly, smiling angel pressed a kiss upon the child's rosy lips, and at the same moment a tear fell upon the little white forehead.

'With this kiss,' he murmured, 'I dedicate thy tender lips to their service of consoling man, and with this tear I give thee entrancing visions of our happiness, undying longings for our heaven!'

A sweet 'farewell' was murmured by all as the golden sunlight poured into the poor little room, and the heavenly messengers hurried along the sunbeam path until they reached their glorious home.

Who has not long since guessed the earthly name of this thousand times blessed infant? What lips will not whisper in deep, reverent emotion the name of the man whose image, like a bright, glorious sun, stands ever on the horizon of our German hearts?

JEAN PAUL, thou hast faithfully fulfilled that which the angels promised at thy cradle! Thou hast pressed us all to thy loving heart—all, I say, not only those

who walked with thee on thy brief earthly pilgrimage. We, to whom it has not been granted to behold thy face, are embraced by thy arms, are comforted by thine eyes, are refreshed by thy smile. Even to the dead dost thou bend down, opening their deep graves, scattering lovely blossoms and gentle tears upon their cold remains. Thou showest us present, past, and future, and hast revealed unto us three worlds—the living world, which glows within the heart of man and in the works of nature, the dead world, buried beneath the earth, and by thy glorious visions of that heavenly ocean of light and sound thou has shown us the world to come. So dost thou soothe every pain, so dost thou lighten every breast, so dost thou still every longing save one—that never-ceasing longing which glowed within thy breast, which dwelt in thy soul—a longing which even the bright pictures and glorious promises of our prophets can but raise higher and higher—the longing for heaven.

With the 14th November, 1825, dawned Jean Paul's last day on earth; then were his earnest longings fulfilled, too soon, ah! far too soon for us. Long before that day, however, the hand of our all-wise Father had gently closed the eyelids of his favourite, that the splendour of that heavenly world, compared with which our brightest sunlight is but dark shadow, might dawn in all its glory upon his longing soul. The dying man smiled as he lay upon his bed of pain, while faithful friends stood weeping around. Perhaps shining angels, the messengers of heaven, perhaps sweet recollections of many a happy spring on earth were hovering around his couch. Yet he was sud-

denly seized by the last of mortal woes, the bitter sorrow of parting from the beautiful earth, an unconquerable longing for its lovely, short-lived flowers, whose language he had known, whose scent had so often refreshed him, whose secrets had been revealed to him, whose death and resurrection he had witnessed, whom he had so fondly loved. And the dying man whispered imploringly,—

'Oh, let me breathe once more the sweet perfume of a full-blown rose! Give me a rose that I may kiss it, and so bid farewell to my earthly friends!'

And as his friends gazed around them despondingly, longing yet knowing not how to fulfil his last desire, a ray of light shone through the darkened room, the air was filled with perfume, as upon the day of the spring offering, and a fresh red rose fell softly upon the bed. A last smile of delight as the sweet wonder was clasped in his hands, as he pressed it upon his eyes, the once clear fountains of love, which should never again overflow on beholding an earthly spring, then one deep, long breath, and the river of Death was passed. His death was indeed, 'The death of an angel.'

A LEONORA.

'Ueber das Herz zu siegen ist gross, ich verehre den Tapfern;
Aber wer durch sein Herz siegt, der gilt noch mehr.'

SCHILLER.

THE happy inhabitants of that beautiful Imperial city, Vienna, although they lead from day to day a life of

constant bustle and excitement, although they are often capricious in their affections, although they seem to have a perpetual thirst for amusement, have at all times retained in their hearts a deep and touchingly earnest feeling—the feeling for their great musicians. The Viennese was and is as proud of his musicians as of his Emperor and of his Prater. True, the said citizen does not always think of inquiring whether his dear Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven are provided with daily bread, whether they have comfortable dwellings and well-filled purses; but then, every true child of Vienna finds in himself abundant occupation. He rejoices most heartily, beaming with pleasure as he listens to new music composed by his favourites, wishes them, glass in hand, a long life, and bows even to the earth if one or other of these great men chances to approach him. Do not smile, even this is much to give! Many a great mind has passed in human form through the world without one warm glance, without one word of thanks for that which it has created. And yet that grateful glance, that kindly word are as a spring sunbeam to the heart of man, and he cannot, without pain, dispense with it, however great he may be, however high he may stand above his fellow men.

Every afternoon at a certain hour, during the unusually beautiful month of June, 1822, a tall man was seen walking to and fro upon the so-called Wasserglacis, every passer-by standing respectfully aside as he approached. The solitary pedestrian was never a moment early or late, neither heat nor showers could hasten his steps, no human form, no flower could attract his eyes, his pace was slow, firm, and majestic, his eyes were always fixed upon the ground and his

hands clasped behind his back. He heeded not the spring breeze as it ruffled the grey hair which clung around his noble, thought-wrinkled forehead, no one could pass him heedlessly, for the stamp of a lofty mind was impressed upon him, and the glorious sun of genius shone like a halo around that bowed head. The very children knew him to be 'Ludwig van Beethoven, who has written so much beautiful music,' and as the musician approached they hushed their noisy laugh, hastily stopped the ball which was about to roll under his feet, quickly snatched up their humming-tops, and ceased to smack their whips. Old and young, high and low, gave way before him, and saluted him respectfully, without expecting a return of their courtesy. Coalheavers, burdened with their heavy loads, stood patiently aside until the dreamer had passed by; all, yes, all honoured and respected him after their own fashion.

At the period of which we are speaking the famous composer was looked upon with an interest even greater than usual, for a few months previously he had written his first and only opera, 'Leonora' (afterwards called 'Fidelio'), and now obstinately refused to allow it to be performed. Deaf to all entreaties, he kept the valuable score safely locked within his desk.

'I cannot find a suitable Leonora,' he said to his friends, who were never weary of worrying him on the subject; 'there are singers in plenty, but not one for me. My Leonora need not shake, or break her neck with roulades; her beauty is of small importance, and she need not change her dress ten times. Besides her voice, however, she must possess *one* thing, and what that is I will not reveal to you, you would only laugh

at 'that mad Beethoven.' Leave me in peace, and think no more of the opera!'

But his impatient friends would not rest; they worried him day by day, and sent him one singer after another until at length they began to grow seriously displeased with him. Strange though it may seem, Beethoven's patience was of long duration. At last, one evening, they told him wonders about the *debût* of a new singer, the great subject of conversation in Vienna. She was the daughter of the celebrated actress Sophie Schröder, and had scarcely reached her seventeenth year; she had recently left Hamburg with her parents, and arrived in Vienna. As Mozart's 'Pamina' her beauty and the charms of her voice delighted all hearts, all united in predicting for her a brilliant future. All this was now communicated to Beethoven, and his friends did not disguise their hope that to this fair hand he would grant the privilege of raising the hidden treasure—his latest work.

Then Beethoven started up. 'What?' he asked, violently, 'am I expected to entrust my sacred treasure to a child—a mere school-girl? Either you are dreaming or your curiosity has bereft you of your wits. No, Ludwig van Beethoven did not compose his "Leonora" for a girl of seventeen! I am weary of your importunities, and now tell you once for all that I will *burn* my opera if any of you dare again to allude to it!'

He was so imposing in his anger, his eyes flashed so threateningly, his voice was so fierce, and so many thunder-clouds stood upon his broad forehead, that his friends crept from the room one by one, and never again was 'Leonora' mentioned in his presence.

It had happened for some time past that the great musician, as he returned from his daily walks, was always met near the city by a young, fair-haired girl. She usually wore a simple white dress, and a neat little straw hat, a narrow, dark red shawl falling over her handsome shoulders. Like all who met the thoughtful composer, she respectfully stood aside as he approached; this was done slowly and hesitatingly, yet with remarkable gracefulness, and her great eyes were fixed upon his countenance. Those eyes seemed powerful enough to bind and to loose, to rouse, attract, and captivate the soul—eyes of a wonderful deep blue, with splendid brows and lashes, passionate in their gaze, and fathomless in their depth of expression. The dreamer Beethoven alone could have so long resisted that earnest, imploring gaze which was constantly fixed upon him; day after day he heedlessly passed the lovely girl without observing her. The beautiful lips trembled as he passed, she seemed about to speak, but remained silent, gazed after him with an expression of mingled admiration and grief, and turned to re-enter the town.

One afternoon, at about five o'clock, the heavens were darkened by an approaching storm. The thunder rolled nearer and nearer, lightning flashed through the air, birds fluttered in terror, and men yet exposed to the storm hastily sought the shelter of their dwellings. Gusts of wind arose, but not a drop of rain fell to cool the stifling air, louder and louder grew the thunder, wilder and wilder the flashes of lightning. Then Ludwig van Beethoven returned from his afternoon walk. He strode along like a seer of old, his head proudly raised, his countenance less dark than it generally

appeared, he seemed to rejoice in the solemn spectacle before him. He alone seemed to understand that mighty language of the heavens; the rolling thunders were answered with a smile, boldly and with undazzled eyes he gazed upon the lightning. The roarings of the tempest were to him but the mighty trumpet-tones of nature's grand symphony, the winds which ruffled his hair seemed to bear, to carry him, and as the grave one raised his arms in strange, silent enthusiasm, he seemed to expect that an angel would descend to him upon the wings of the lightning. Oh! that an angel would bring him a giant harp, to interpret the wonderful melodies with which his inspired soul was filled to overflowing.

And now Beethoven thought he did indeed behold an angel; before him stood a white-clad form upon which he gazed in wonder. But the supposed angel trembled, stretched out her hands toward him, hastily murmured a few unintelligible words, and gazed at him imploringly. Beethoven glanced in surprise at the girl's pale countenance; he seemed to remember those lovely features, that beautiful form—had he not often seen her? But where? in a dream, perhaps? He could not tell.

'My child,' he said, at last, bending down to the young girl who still stood before him, 'why are you out in the storm? Have you been belated? have you missed your way?'

'I was only waiting for you!' said a sweet voice, firmly, yet softly.

'For me! what can you want with me?'

'Your—"Leonora"'

Beethoven started back.

'What is your name?'

'Wilhelmine Schröder. I stood here many days with my earnest request, but not until now could I venture to speak.'

'And did you not see the approaching storm? were you not afraid?'

'I fear but *one* thing, that you will refuse my request!'

Beethoven made no answer, but gazed steadily into the girl's blue eyes. They did not droop before his glance; she blushed crimson, but still she looked upon him. Beethoven stretched out his hand, and held in his powerful grasp the tiny hands of the lovely suppliant, he then drew a deep breath, and said, gently,—

'Come to me to-morrow, my child, and be of good courage. I think I have found my Leonora! But now let us away from here; I will take you home.'

And as she leant upon his arm, a bright smile was on her countenance, her cheeks glowed, her heart beat wildly, and her whole frame trembled; the fulfilment of her most burning desire was near. The storm had ceased, the lightning was less vivid, but a refreshing rain was falling. At the gates of the city Beethoven, with paternal solicitude, placed his young companion in a carriage which was passing at the moment, and Wilhelmine Schröder named her mother's place of residence. In child-like, irrepressible enthusiasm she kissed Beethoven's hand at parting; he turned to go, but once more looking back, he saw the loveliest of faces turned to him from the carriage window. The young, thoughtful forehead, with its bordering of golden hair, was pale with excitement, and as she bowed before him, her wonderful eyes once more

smiled and greeted him. Beethoven felt his heart grow warmer, his mind was filled with a presentiment at once blissful and sad, as he said softly to himself,—

'This woman will cast over my path a ray of light, —the *last!*'

And on the following morning Beethoven sat at the piano, the score of his 'Leonora' before him; at his side stood the youthful singer, Wilhelmine Schröder. He had briefly explained to the fair-haired girl the subject of the opera, which mightily attracted her, hastily passing over the first numbers of Jaquino and Marcellina; and now, one hand strictly marking the time, the other hand striking the chords of the accompaniment, he softly hummed the Leonora voice-part of the quartett,—

'Mir ist so wunderbar.'

The girl followed each note with fixed attention, and her blue eyes sparkled with enthusiasm as she listened to the terzett,—

'Muth, Söhnchen, Muth.'

But when that splendid picture, the great aria,

'Abscheulicher, wo eilst du hin,'

was unfolded before her, a shudder of deep agitation thrilled through her delicate frame. The excitement of the almost breathless listener increased with every number, Beethoven played and intoned with ever increasing enthusiasm; she knew not how harsh and broken was the voice by which these glories were revealed to her, neither did she feel the tears which

coursed slowly and heavily down her cheeks at the duet,—

'Nur hurtig fort, nur frisch gegraben.'

She could not turn her eyes away from the wonderful man who sat before her, for whom her reverence was so great. What a strangely attractive picture, in the narrow frame of the simple room, was presented by these two forms;—rich, earnest autumn and smiling spring. Beethoven, in his wide, fur-lined dressing-gown, sat absorbed in his creation, raising from time to time his grave eyes to the countenance of the listener; the brightness of spring was shed over the young girl at his side, over that countenance with its clear, lovely features, and sunbeams trembled in the heavy fair hair, which clung around the fair cheeks and formed a golden knot upon her beautiful neck.

'An diesem jugendlichen Haupte hingen
So viele Hoffnungen, als in den Zweigen
Im wonnevollen Maimond hängen Blüthen.'

Beethoven played on more and more rapidly, his hand hurrying over the keys.

'Now comes the moment of highest exaltation,' he said at length; 'in this passage the rays of light of the whole opera are concentrated. Listen to this cry, all depends upon it. Here, my child, you will show whether I have been deceived in you or not!'

And now, in passionate inspiration he intoned the well-known cry,—

'Tödt' erst sein Weib!'

Now, for the first time did Wilhelmine Schröder know the gigantic greatness of the task for which she had

stretched out her hand; she tremblingly clasped her hands, her heart filled at once with joy and fear. 'Tödt' erst sein Weib!' this one cry rang in her ears, she heard nothing more, and the brilliant *finale* passed like a dream. But when Beethoven rose from his seat and closed the score, she approached him with trembling steps. 'Give me your blessing that I may be successful in the work which I have undertaken!' she said, solemnly, bending low her head. And as Beethoven thoughtfully laid his hand upon the fair hair, a smile of satisfaction glided like an autumn sunbeam over his grave countenance.

That night, before Wilhelmine Schröder slept, she folded her beautiful hands, and closed her evening prayer with the words, 'Oh God, grant me to be a Leonora such as he has longed for, that I may give him yet one pleasure!'

A few weeks later Wilhelmine Schröder appeared at Vienna, in the opera of 'Fidelio,' the ideal of the devoted heroism of love, by which Beethoven had been inspired, was realised in her. The composer himself sat in a little dimly-lighted box close to the stage. Those sweet yet powerful tones which streamed from the lips of the youthful singer were but faint and broken sounds to his ears, even at that time almost closed; but he saw her lovely form, borne up by devotion and excitement, he saw those eyes, so full of enthusiasm and inspiration, and the applause of the delighted crowd was to him as the murmuring of the distant ocean.

The curtain rose upon the second act, the beautiful wife descended into the dark dungeon, fed her starving

husband, passed through all the stages of soul torment, until at last came that wonderful ray of light, that mighty cry,—

'Tödt erst sein Weib!'

As the chord was sounded, Beethoven rose in feverish excitement, his eyes fixed upon the lips of the singer. For a moment it seemed as though she hesitated, but then, raising herself in truly glorious beauty, that B, the note of highest agitation, thrilled through the souls of the listeners. And the wonder was accomplished, that one mighty, irresistible tone defied all barriers, and penetrated even through the Meister's closed ear. Suddenly all seemed light within him, golden waves of sound poured in upon him, his Leonora was no longer a dream, it sounded and sang; as nature is reflected in a single drop of water, so the whole work was reflected in that one glorious B which he had heard. Boundless delight, unrestrained happiness took possession of him, he longed to clasp the maiden to his heart, to bathe her in his tears, long buried desires, long abandoned hopes rose from their death-sleep and smiled upon him. But his body and soul were inured to sorrows alone; the man, strong only in battling against grief and privations, was overwhelmed by this most sudden feeling of happiness—Ludwig van Beethoven had fainted.

This performance of 'Fidelio' was indeed the last, but perhaps also the brightest sunbeam which fell upon the dark path of the noble tone-creator. But what was it that Ludwig van Beethoven had required in the interpreter of his 'Leonora,' and found at last in the blue eyes of a young girl?

'Fidelio' was carried out into the world by Wilhelmine Schröder. Who could hear her Leonora without lasting emotion? Who, having seen her in that character, could ever forget her? Hundreds of singers have since sung the music of Leonora, could one among them thus captivate our souls? But was Wilhelmine Schröder more beautiful, more charming in her gracefulness, was her voice more powerful? Oh, no! lovely women have arrayed themselves in Fidelio's simple dress, splendid voices have sung the aria, 'Abscheulicher, wo eilst du hin,' the queens of song have expended their powers upon Leonora, but was the cry, 'Tödt' erst sein Weib,' ever heard as from the lips of that fair-haired girl? And why? Here follows the answer to all inquiries: Wilhelmine Schröder was the possessor of that talisman which overcomes the world, of that mysterious treasure which is growing more and more precious in these days of lukewarmness and coldness—the choicest treasure of earth, the richest blessing of heaven—a warm heart!

TWO BROTHERS.

Dem Einen ist sie die hohe, die himmlische Göttin, dem Andern
Eine tüchtige Kuh, die ihn mit Butter versorgt.
SCHILLER.

IN a narrow street of a great commercial town there lived, about thirty years ago, a poor Jewess, who gained a precarious livelihood by the purchase and sale of cast-off clothing. She had seen better days, and her mar-

ried life had been a most happy one; but her husband had died of nervous fever, scarcely three months after the birth of twins, vigorous boys, of whom the parents were not a little proud. Isaac had just commenced business, his undertakings were crowned with success, and his children's future was looked forward to with joyful hope; then came death, making an eternal end to care and toil, and the busy hands which had laboured so unceasingly now lay stiff and cold by the dead man's side. Sarah's heart was torn with grief; she went with her two children to the Rabbi, begging for his advice in her sore trouble and loneliness. The Rabbi consulted with the elders, who assembled, and counselled, and assisted as best they could; and so, after many days of weeping and sleepless nights, the poor woman was enabled by laborious industry to gain a livelihood for herself and her children.

The brothers grew up amid hardships and want, and had reached their sixth year, when they manifested a taste which soon excited, to a high degree, the attention of all who were interested in the children. Both exhibited an extraordinary love for music, a marked attention to every tone which they heard. Jacob would run after every trumpeter, and loiter near every garden concert; he often spent hours in following barrel-organ players from house to house, could exactly calculate their receipts, and sometimes collected a few pence for the musician. His appearance was unpleasing, his fingers clumsy, his gait hasty and awkward, his movements ungainly. His countenance bore the type of his race, but a world of energy and intelligence sparkled in his small black eyes, and their expression was remarkably cold and cunning.

David was a perfect contrast to his brother, very tall for his age, slight, of timid and gentle disposition and possessing the mournful beauty of his people, that true oriental type of features which irresistibly attracts and captivates us when we find it in its true, expressive purity. His eyes were fascinating in their melancholy gaze, his complexion was a faint brown, the cheeks free from redness, he had thick, waving black hair, and splendid teeth. Often did men and women pause in admiration before the poorly-clad boy, and of free will bestow some trifle upon him, money, flowers, or dainties, all of which he immediately carried off to his mother. Even in his infancy the humming of the kettle, the chirp of a cricket, and the twitter of a swallow had great charms for him, and as he grew older he would spend hours by the side of a little cascade in the town gardens, listening to the noise of the falling drops. It was his greatest delight to stand at the church doors and listen to the tones of the organ; he heeded neither frost or burning sun, but would wait patiently until the wonderful music reached his ear.

One bitter winter day the old cathedral organist found the half-frozen boy cowering at a side-door, and when the child, in answer to his urgent questions, confessed what had thus chained him to the threshold, the kind-hearted musician showed him a quiet corner near the organ, where he might sit at every service. He also invited him to his house, and when one day the boy really came, trembling with joy, he played him Bach's fugues and old chorales. This time of happiness, however, was of short duration, for the old organist died, and his successor was less warm-hearted towards the poor Jewish boy.

In the summer season the brothers went together to those public gardens where bands of musicians performed and the public crowded to hear them. Of course the children could only stand outside, but Jacob was always inventing some means of gaining a small income; now, his shoe-brush in his hand, he respectfully approached the new-comers, and skilfully cleaned the dusty boots of the gentlemen, both young and old; now he cut tooth-picks and offered them for sale; now he sold neatly-twisted cigar lights or bunches of simple field and forest flowers, to which his tasteful grouping added additional charms. On such occasions he always earned a few pence which, at home, he would wrap in an old handkerchief and conceal under his pillow. David could take no share in these pursuits; he would sit quietly behind the fence, as far as possible from the orchestra, so that the music reached him only in softened, broken sounds, which his imagination could convert into chords and melodies at pleasure. At home he sang to himself by the hour together, his countenance almost radiant, as he brushed the old clothes of which his mother was about to dispose. Jacob often called him idle and awkward, and David, having with tears confessed that his brother was right, would try to stand with flowers at the garden gate; but no sooner did the first sound rise into the air than he began to tremble, dropped the flowers, or tossed them into the lap of the first child he saw, and then crept into his corner.

'Mother, if you could but come with me just once and hear what I hear!' he would often say, as he retired to bed, to poor Sarah, who employed the late hours of the evening in mending her children's scanty

clothes, so that they might be neat, 'you would forget all your troubles and your life of toil, and would be as rich and happy as I am. Try it just once!'

'And what would become of us if our mother were to stand listening to the music?' interrupted Jacob, angrily; 'who would get us food and clothing—you, perhaps?'

And David turned sorrowfully away, but Sarah gently and lovingly stroked her favourite's soft hair, saying,—

'If your father had lived you might have learned to play some instrument, and who knows whether David would not have been the one to enrich his parents!'

The boys were about eleven years of age when an unimportant event decided their future career. A celebrated piano virtuoso, who was passing on his way to Vienna, had announced that he would give a concert in the native town of the two brothers. His fame had flown through half the world, and the public crowded to secure tickets, although they were sold at a very high price. Long before the hour appointed for the concert Jacob and David were standing at the entrance of the hall; the former pressed close to the ticket-office, and with wondering eyes observed the sums taken by the ticket agent.

'Oh, if we could be so fortunate!' he whispered to his brother.

'We will beg; perhaps they will let us stand behind the door and listen,' answered David, who had not understood his meaning.

They appealed to the door-keeper, but he would hear nothing, would allow nothing.

'What can you Jew boys understand of music?' he answered, roughly; 'why can you want to stand and freeze behind the door?'

'Oh, I could do more than that for music!' cried David.

'No, that's true enough!' added Jacob; 'what would it profit me to stand behind the door, where I could not see him play? I must see him, I must be rich as he is!'

'Here are two tickets for the children,' said a fine, pale-featured gentleman, who had approached unobserved, and had heard a part of the conversation; 'and wait for me after the concert, I wish to speak to you.'

The door-keeper bowed low.

'That was *he!*' he remarked, almost solemnly, to the astonished children.

'He looks just like other men,' murmured Jacob; 'his art can be no magic, after all.'

David kissed his ticket and pressed it tightly between his hands, while he anxiously looked around him lest he should be robbed of his treasure.

The concert began with Mozart's overture to 'Don Juan.' Jacob had boldly taken a seat close to the orchestra, he wished to see the pianist play, desiring nothing more. David had been separated from him, and sat behind a pillar at the end of the hall. As the splendid music approached, and the pillar which concealed the trembling boy shook as at the touch of a Sampson, a veil fell from David's eyes, and he felt, he knew, 'That is *true* music!' His trembling hands were folded, he leaned against the pillar, so he received the first greeting of Mozart's glorious genius. There are privileged minds to which, in one moment of time,

is revealed the comprehension of things which others may in vain pass a lifetime in brooding upon. So it was with David. He understood the glory of Mozart, whose name, thanks to the Jew's school, he was enabled laboriously to decipher upon the programme. 'Oh, to create such wonders!' was his constant thought. He heard not the strange virtuoso as in intricate passages he stormed, rushed, flew and buzzed up and down the keys, he heard not the stormy applause of the throng, he was brought to consciousness only by the warm, flower-decked stream of Beethoven's 'Pastoral Symphony.' At the close of the concert he dreamily followed his brother to the door, dreamily he heard the strange musician's question, 'What is to become of you, poor fellows?' but then a lofty enthusiasm streamed upon him, he raised his beautiful eyes to the questioner, and replied,—

'I will be a Mozart!'

'And I will learn to play, and earn money like you!' cried Jacob.

The famous, wealthy virtuoso laughed, and offered to send the two boys to Berlin, and there, at his own cost, to secure for them two years' instruction in music from an excellent master. Let not your admiration be too great, it was no generosity, no deep and true interest for music which led the musician to this certainly striking action; it was simply a whim. The great man, seeking by some unusual means to create enthusiastic interest, eagerly availed himself of the means thrown in his way. His object was attained to his satisfaction, the romantic history made the round of all the newspapers, embellished by the most pompous additions and marginal notes referring to his surprising

generosity. 'In two years' time I shall come to Berlin myself,' he had said to the boys; 'I shall then see what you have learned, and will further provide for the one who has been industrious.'

No one thought of poor Sarah. 'The Jewess will be glad to get rid of the children,' it was said, 'such vagabonds would sell everything!' And the faithful mother made no remonstrance when the plans of the generous musician were communicated to her. 'You will be better off than with me,' she said at parting, and did not weep. But her God and ours saw her hot tears, saw her clasped hands as she sat in loneliness, and heard the cry of a mother's grief-pierced heart. After a while she resumed her usual occupations, selling old clothes, going and coming; but she was fast growing old, her form was more bent, and her eyes were always red, but no one cared to ask the cause. 'In two years I shall be a Mozart, and then I will come and fetch you!' had been David's parting words. Sarah always, always thought of them.

Two years passed, and the postman brought a letter to Sarah as she sat in her dark, narrow room. Trembling at this unusual event, she lit a small lamp, opened the letter, and knew by the almost illegible signature that it had been written by her favourite David. Her tears flowed so fast that it was long ere she could read, but at last the writing grew less confused. Sarah read slowly; half the night passed, and when she had finished the last line she fainted, striking her weary head upon the hard table. Here is the letter,—

'I have been told, dear mother, that I am soon to take a long, long journey, but I know nothing of my

return; I would fain give you comfort in this new separation, and tell you that I am *not* a Mozart, poor mother, so that you may not grieve too deeply for your child. Should it be a long, long time before you again hear of David, do not sorrow, they will soon tell you where he is gone. How many, many days have passed since I kissed you for the last time, how I have longed to press my cheeks upon your dear face! Did you weep for us? I, too, wept for you, and I have been very unhappy; but now that is all past, and I am happier than I can tell you. See, dear mother, they wanted to make me learn all kinds of strange things, saying, "Do you not wish to be a Mozart?" I was compelled to learn the notes, to study thorough-bass, and to go through a school; they screwed my hands to the keys, and I was only allowed to play five notes, then eight, and so on. I heard no music, for our master said that it only distracts the attention; he did not let me go out in the open air, and afterwards only now and then, for a few minutes at a time. But do not grieve for that, dear mother; a tree stood before the window of my little room, so near that I could hold the dear leaves, so that I had enough of beautiful green. If I had learned better they would have given me more liberty, but I deserved the punishment, for I was so careless, so slow to learn, I understood and remembered nothing, nothing. Ah! the music which can be learnt thus must be very different from that of which I used to dream; there must be another kind of music from that which is *taught*, or how could there have been a Mozart, mother? Music is ever ringing and singing within me, but oh, how different is it to the music without! Those many learned

words, who could understand them? those great and small, thick and thin notes, how they puzzled me! They danced up and down before me like spirits, they mocked me, climbed up and down the music bars, and played all manner of antics. Sometimes I lost my senses from fright, when my master's severe eyes gazed upon me, and he asked so many signs and names which I did not know,—he could not see how mad they were, those black things which he asked about. "As a punishment for your idleness you shall have no supper to-night," was often said. Mother, hunger was not so painful as the thought that I could never, never be a Mozart.

'My happiest time was in the late evening, when I sat at the little piano and knew that no one could hear *how* I played. Then I heard true music, believe me; I know not whether I played, or whether my stiff, awkward fingers were guided by some higher power; but I heard the organ as it sounded long ago in the Christian church, and I felt no pain, no hunger, no sorrow, no longings. One evening, however, my master returned earlier than usual and heard me play; he came up and called me a silly dreamer and jingler. On the following day the little piano was carried into his own room, and from that time I could only play there, and never in the evening. I was separated from my brother at the first, they said he was far more advanced than I, and was learning much. At last the long sorrowful days and the quiet dark nights made me ill, dear mother, and in my illness I distinctly saw you at my bedside; your hand arranged the pillows and dried my forehead, and you might listen with me to the Mozart music which was always in

my ears. Mother, I know what harmony is, although I could not understand the science of thorough-bass; I know that it is true music for which my soul has ever longed. And that soul will no longer remain here, I am going to the land whence flows the golden stream, to the source of music. I myself was but a lost tone, for whom on earth no harmonious chord could be found. Now you know what journey I mean, dear mother, you will not grudge it me. They are all kind to me now; our benefactor, Mr. G., is here, and I am living with him. From my windows I look upon a garden, and a church stands not too far off; the tones of the organ often come over to me, and talk with me as with a brother. I am so unspeakably happy, I feel that I shall pass away as gently as the sound which melts in the soft night-air. Good-night, dear mother, your Sabbath, too, will come!

'DAVID.'

On the margin of the letter Jacob's firm hand had written the words,—

'My brother is dead! It is best for him, he was not made for work and care. I know not when I shall come to you, but I shall not come poor. Herr G. has obtained my admission to the great academy of music.'

Ten years had passed since the above letter had reached poor Sarah's little room, when suddenly a report was spread that a distinguished young pianist, a pupil of the celebrated G., would shortly arrive in F. and give a concert there. Musical and other news-

papers had made the name of Giacomo S. famous in all parts of Germany; there was but one opinion respecting his technical knowledge, and of late the interest in the young virtuoso had even increased. It was said that in a concert which he had given at Cracow he had won the heart of an extremely wealthy young Russian lady, and that the marriage had already taken place. Tickets were taken beforehand, and a crowded concert was expected.

One evening a handsome travelling carriage stopped before the B. Hotel (the finest in the town), a short gentleman descended, and slowly lifted out a tall lady, wrapped in furs. The rooms, which had already been secured, were warmed and lighted in readiness for the anxiously expected Herr Giacomo S. and his bride. Scarcely had they entered the drawing-room when Giacomo, hastily glancing at his watch, said uneasily to his wife,—

'I have an important visit to make in reference to the concert, dear Irma, be prepared for one or even two hours of solitude; but I will first unpack a few books for you.'

He did so. The fair-haired lady was standing before the large mirror arranging her curls, and stroking into order the folds and trimmings of her rich black satin dress. She now turned towards her husband her cold, handsome countenance, which bore an expression of most evil humour, and said,—

'Mais, mon cher, I thought we were to visit the opera to-night, it is yet scarcely six o'clock!'

'No, you must give up that scheme, I have more important business. To-morrow we shall be in the whirl of society; resign yourself to these few hours of solitude.'

Madame pouted, monsieur wrapped himself in his cloak, for it was winter, and left the hotel on foot. He passed through many little streets, walking faster and faster until he reached the poorest alley of all. It was almost dark, but he soon found the house which he sought, and climbing up the old stairs, knocked at a door. A feeble voice bade him enter, and Jacob stood before his mother Sarah. The bad street-lamp cast its faint light into the room, and he could see the old Jewess as, motionless as a statue, she sat leaning against the wall.

'Who is there?' she asked, but without moving or opening her eyes; many tears had made the old woman blind.

'It is Jacob, mother!' he answered, kissing her hands with the full, touching reverence which is a characteristic of the Jew's intercourse with his parents.

'Come here, that I may bless you,' she said, gently, but joylessly, with strange calmness.

When he stood quite near she raised herself, carefully passed her hand over his countenance and his garments, then kissed him on the forehead as deliberately and calmly as if she had caressed her son only an hour before.

'You are still poor, dear mother!' said Jacob, after a pause, during which he had been looking round the room, to find everything as he had left it twelve years before—the boys' bed, the old clothes which they had worn, the little bench near the stove, the two chairs, and the large old table. 'I am now rich,' he added, 'and you shall be rich with me.'

The tones of his voice, usually harsh and shrill, were softened, and over his unpleasing countenance

passed an expression of almost tender affection as thus he spoke to her. Sarah smiled wearily, and leaned back.

'What does my Jacob call rich?' she murmured. 'I know but one treasure, and that you cannot restore to me; you know what buried treasure I mean.'

'I know it, poor mother. David is dead, he could bear nothing; I could endure because I wished to be rich. You know that a strong, iron will is the heritage of our injured race; we have a will which can overcome all, which can attain to all things. David had not that will, and he died. I wanted to learn music, not because I loved it, no, because in these days it enriches more speedily than any other art—and I learnt it. I have been kicked, beaten, and trodden under foot like a dog, I suffered hunger and a thousand pains and humiliations—I bore all, because I *would* bear. Now all is past, mine are riches and honour; but you, too, shall again be happy.'

'Leave me, child; I desire nothing more, there is neither grief nor sorrow for me; I am waiting for my Sabbath. But the time of work is longer than I had expected, and I am so weary!'

'Mother, come with me, I will care for you, honour and serve you, you shall live in sunshine. My wife, too——'

'Jehovah's blessing be upon her if she will love me with the devotion of the children of our race!'

'I am a *Christian*, mother, by that means alone could I gain the esteem I wished for; no one should call me a Jew boy!'

'Be rich and happy, but leave me to be poor and despised!'

'But the wife who, delighted with my playing, gave me her hand and heart, will love you, my mother.'

'Your mother, perhaps—the poor Jewess, never!'

Jacob was silent as he thought of the aristocratic Irma, with her cold glances and haughty bearing; he thought of her proud relations, and he sighed and gnashed his teeth.

'Go, my son,' said his mother, after a long silence; 'let me sleep in peace. My eagerly expected Sabbath will not fail to shine upon my bowed head in all its peace and glory. I will wait patiently!'

'In three days I shall give my concert, and the next morning I will come to you again, then you must follow me.'

Sarah gently shook her head, quietly laid her hand upon her son's brow, murmured a blessing, and Jacob departed. He sought the Rabbi, made himself known, and gave him money for Sarah. She was to live in a handsome room, sleep on soft couches, be served and waited upon like a lady of distinction, and this was to be done on the following day. The Rabbi promised that it should be so, and Jacob with a heavy heart returned to his hotel. His young wife was reclining in a *chaise longue* and carelessly turning the leaves of Heine's 'Buch der Lieder.'

'Have you been amused, Irma?' asked her husband, absently.

'Avec ce petit Juif là? Fi donc!' was the answer, as she contemptuously cast the book upon the table.

The concert given by Herr Giacamo S. was as crowded as had been expected, the virtuoso was received with rapturous applause, and all eyes were attracted

by the almost regal dress of his young wife. He played a brilliant fantasia on airs from Meyerbeer's 'Le Prophète.' The audience scarcely ventured to breathe as the performer, in the most entrancing 'piano,' began the mendicant song of poor Fides. As the plaintive air died away, and the delighted hearers were crying *da capo*, a simple hearse was passing the gates of the city on its way to the Jewish burying-ground. It was a beggar whom they were taking to rest, the Sabbath had at length dawned for patient Sarah, she had entered upon the glories of eternity.

A FORGOTTEN ONE.

'Von blauen Veilchen war der Kranz
Der Hannchen's Locken schmückte.'

LUDWIG BERGER is one of those almost forgotten names, the name of a noble musician, of a pure, truly amiable man. Ludwig Berger is a full, harmonious minor chord, the echo of which calls forth sweet yet mournful dreams. The remembrance which he has left in the hearts of all who were fortunate enough to know him intimately is of no less value than the shining traces of his musical life which we admire and follow in his works and in his pupils. But his humble grave, over whose turf but a few years have crept with gentle tread, is as little remembered as though it had pressed the weary form half a century ago or more. Many of his favourite pupils, among them the youngest and most glorious, have followed

their honoured master to the land whence no one has been known to return.

Berger's works are, sad to say, half buried with him. Here and there a nosegay of his truly poetical songs may bloom in the music-room of some true old music-lover, and here only may sometimes be found one of the four beautiful piano sonatas which were once the delight of Berlin and St. Petersburgh. The remembrance of Ludwig Berger is melancholy as his days on earth, passed in sickness and solitude. Look at this little picture from his life.

In a bright little room a pale young woman was sitting near the green-curtained cradle of a sleeping infant, scarcely three weeks old. The delicate features of the fair, happy mother told a touching tale of once blooming health and beauty, which had now taken refuge in the great blue eyes, wherein light, youth, strength, and happiness were all to be seen—bright oases in a snowy plain. Her little foot rested upon the rocker of the cradle, and her lips sang softly, almost in a whisper, a cradle-song with popular words and a charmingly simple melody. The first verse was,—

'Bring' ich mein Liebchen zur Ruh'
Sing' ich ein Liedchen dazu.'

Snow flakes were whirling outside, and frost-flowers pressed curiously against the little window-panes, for it was winter, a long, icy winter in St. Petersburgh. Sledges passed along in rapid career, saleswomen and town-criers, wrapped in furs, uttered their noisy cries, and beggars were singing; all these broken sounds found their way into the room, but the young mother heeded them not.

'Ludwig must come soon!' she whispered, smiling dreamily, and after casting a long, motherly glance upon the cradle, she slowly moved towards the corner where stood a small piano, covered as carefully as the child's cradle. She dusted the cover, and then, going to the writing-table, she endeavoured to bring into their right positions the portraits of Mozart and Clementi, which were squinting at each other. How thoroughly German was that little room! White, cloudlike curtains, pipes in a corner, views of Berlin and its neighbourhood, a bouquet of dried violets in its frame, a set of prints, a German wall almanack, upon the wall a small collection of portraits of German musicians, a dressing-gown hanging over the back of the writing-chair. No European nation preserves its own character so fully, so universally as the German; but fortunately he never presses it upon others, and thinks it quite enough to enjoy himself after his fashion within his four walls. The pictures having been arranged to her satisfaction, and the papers upon the writing-desk likewise put in order with a timid hand, the young mother discovered a sheet of music-paper, which bore the inscription, 'To Hannchen.' The first verse seemed completed; here are the first lines,—

'Von blauen Veilchen war der Kranz,
Der Hannchen's Locken schmückte,
Als ich zum ersten Mal in Tanz
Sie schüchtern an mich drückte.'

Tears stood in the eyes of the pale mother.

'To me! Ah, he has thought of my birthday, which we shall keep to-morrow, according to our dear old

German calendar,' she said, in deep melancholy; 'how good he is!'

'Do you really think so?' asked a man's gentle voice, and Ludwig Berger, who had entered softly, threw his arms round his excited wife. 'Well, as you know it,' he continued, cheerfully, 'I will not deny it. I am composing for you the words and music of a violet-song, you love them so well, those little blue flowers of our home. But Hannchen, do not weep so bitterly!' he anxiously entreated, as he seated himself and drew her down upon his knee; 'you will soon be able to gather your favourites in your quiet little garden before the gates; I have promised it, and will keep my word. See, nearly four years have been passed in the great city of the Czars, my wealthy pupils will soon have made a rich man of your poor Ludwig, and then we will gladly turn our backs upon the splendours of St. Petersburg, and set out on our pilgrimage to the sandy deserts of our beloved Berlin.'

His fair-haired wife was again smiling, and the expression of unbounded home-sickness, which made her countenance so interesting to an attentive observer, was softened, and melted away in melancholy joy.

'Oh, how doubly rich we shall return!' she said, lovingly, as she pointed to the cradle. Berger answered her glance with a smile of fatherly pride, and laughingly inquired whether the rogue had been hushed to sleep by papa's cradle song, or, if not, whether he had at least screamed in the same key. She nodded assent to everything, and he caressingly pressed her to his heart.

'But how will you finish my birthday song?' inquired the young wife; 'you have scarcely completed

the first verse, and this evening you must go to Prince Tz——.'

'The second verse is already in my head!' was the answer; 'and the last concerns *the boy*, who is to give you a bunch of violets. That was my idea, and now you know all about it.'

'Violets in winter!' she cried, excited and astonished, 'what a fabulous notion!'

'In the hot-houses of St. Petersburg all flower fables become reality,' he answered; 'you will see, I'll bring you violets to-morrow.'

The night had now quite closed in, the lamp was brought by the maid, and mother and child were put to bed in the adjoining room. The old, experienced woman who attended them was a German, who had lived many years in St. Petersburg as sick nurse to her fellow-countrymen in that city.

'You are more feverish than yesterday,' she said; 'I cannot understand why the doctor seems to think so little of it.'

'Hush, hush!' interrupted the young mother; 'my husband must know nothing of this to-night; in a few hours he will play for Prince Tz——, and he must be harassed by no thoughts of evil. To-morrow all will surely be well!'

She tenderly wished her husband good-night, and he prepared to drive at ten o'clock to the prince's *soirée*. He had been invited, a few days previously, to play before a small and select company on the occasion of the birthday of the prince's only daughter, Berger's pupil.

'I wish I could stay at home!' murmured Berger, dejectedly; 'the violet-song ought to be finished.'

He again seated himself at the desk and wrote a few lines, then sighed, 'That will not do, the birthday song will *not* be joyous! I will leave it until to-morrow, when I have the violets before me perhaps I shall be more successful.'

Before he set out he cast a long and tender glance upon his two inestimable treasures, his wife and child. The young mother lay with glowing cheeks, breathing quickly, in an uneasy sleep.

'Give me the violets, Ludwig! quick, quick!' she cried, suddenly, eagerly stretching out her arms. 'You are too late, you have waited too long! oh, my poor, poor friend!'

'She often dreams so vividly,' said the old nurse, reassuringly, to the anxious husband.

The reception rooms of the splendour-loving Prince Tz—— were brilliantly illuminated on this evening, and the fabulous beauty of the decorations awakened recollections of the legendary days of enchanted castles. The gorgeous palaces of Russian noblemen could alone realize the visions of golden rooms and blooming gardens in the midst of winter. No description could give an adequate idea of the overpowering splendour and magnificence of such a scene. Only three rooms had been thrown open on this occasion; the piano had been placed in the beautifully decorated central apartment, the first was used as a reception room, and the third had been transformed into a smiling garden, with fountains of scented water. About thirty persons were assembled, the *élite* of the higher music patrons, and a few friends of the prince's beautiful daughter, for the most part Berger's pupils

Among the musicians were observed Clementi's expressive features, and the kindly countenance of John Field, both, at that time, visitors to St. Petersburg, and warm friends of the talented German composer.

It was Clementi who had persuaded Berger to transfer his residence to St. Petersburg. As he passed through Berlin on his way to Russia, he had heard young Berger play a few of his own compositions at a party, and delighted by the dreamy talent of the virtuoso, had at once proposed that they should be travelling companions. The offer was joyfully and gratefully accepted, and soon the two excellent musicians set out together, teaching and being taught, sharing and enjoying. When they arrived at St. Petersburg the warm recommendations of the celebrated older musician obtained for the young German so many pupils that his well-being in the foreign land was assured. When Clementi left him, Berger, to his unbounded delight, found himself able to send for his bride—his dear, quiet Hannchen, to whom he had been engaged many years—from Berlin, and now at last he could enjoy his longed-for home pleasures in a cottage on the banks of the Neva, far from his beloved Germany. The frequent illnesses which attacked his delicate wife, a sufferer from home-sickness, often cast dark shadows over the blooming meadows of their young married life; and when Clementi returned to St. Petersburg, after a five years' absence, he found his pupil and favourite at the time in enthusiastic delight at the birth of a son, but, on the whole, far from being as happy and as free from care as he had expected. The nervous irritability of his richly-endowed character was increasing to a remarkable extent, and fast

laying the foundations of a certain dreamy sadness. Berger was one of those who seem to draw only poison from every blossom, who know not true, careless joy, and as they gaze up into the most cloudless sky think of nought but a future storm.

On this evening especially, as he entered the prince's reception-rooms, Clementi remarked the unusual paleness and sadness of his favourite's countenance, a mournful expression which could not be dispelled, even for an instant, by the remarkable deference with which the modest musician was received.

'Would that the coming hours could pass with double speed!' he whispered to Clementi and Field. 'My wife is ill, and has been most eagerly expecting a bouquet of violets which I had ordered as a birthday present for her to-morrow. It has been carried off from the poor musician by some wealthy bojar; a thousand roubles were offered for the bouquet, and the owner of the hot-house took them. I have just come from him; he wanted to put me off with other flowers. In vain I immediately sent to make inquiries at other greenhouses; no violets were to be had.'

Clementi endeavoured to soothe his excited friend and thought that other flowers might give the same pleasure, but Berger impatiently shook his head, and replied,—

'You do not know my poor Hannchen; violets are her favourites, connected as they are with the sweetest recollections of our courtship. And,' added he to himself, 'what would my song be without its sweet companions?'

Kathinka, Princess Tz——, now approached the musicians, and turned to her master with the request,

pressed in the purest German, that he would play his E♭ major sonata. Berger gazed almost absently upon the suppliant who stood before him in all her charms. Her dress was of heavy white satin, and strings of costly pearls were twined among her dark hair and around her beautiful neck and arms. The glow which trembled and sparkled in the dark eyes, the gentle, ever-varying expression of the lovely youthful countenance betrayed a warm heart, and the beautiful eyes smiled graciously, almost tenderly, as she addressed her honoured master.

'Princess Kathinka shall be obeyed,' answered Berger, after a pause; 'but she will have pity upon her master, who could not, this evening, fix all his thoughts upon any important piece of music, even were it his own composition. My wife is ill, and my heart is heavy; my noble pupil will allow me to play a voluntary. Take me as I am! the music will not be worthy of such an occasion, but you will doubtless soon overcome the melancholy impression; no shades could sadden your atmosphere of light. You belong to the happy ones of earth, to whom God has given eternal sunshine.'

A shade as of deep sorrow passed over her countenance, and she grew pale as she turned away from her master.

'Do not, on my account, struggle against the feelings which possess you at this moment,' she said, softly, and left him.

Ludwig Berger played.

It is a remarkable gift, that of pouring forth one's inmost soul in sound, of entrancingly revealing one's most secret thoughts and feelings—a gift which is

bestowed upon favoured ones. Even among musicians there are few who can truly give *themselves* in their so-called voluntaries, they generally form a ragout of pleasing melodies, brilliant variations, artistic shakes, ingeniously interwoven reminiscences, 'et voilà tout.' Simple-hearted men, however, whose souls (not their fingers alone) have been inspired by divine music, will often astonish us by their heart-stirring voluntaries; they are often only a few connected chords which we dreamily pursue with our ears and with our hearts, but the history of a human soul lies within them. Those among us who have heard the voluntaries of Mendelssohn have heard a true disciple of Berger, have heard at once the 'Musician by the grace of God' and the noble, intellectual 'man'; to them, as they listened to his music, has been revealed that splendid moon-lit night, that entrancing poetry of sadness which lived and shone forth in Berger's voluntaries.

Ludwig Berger played. A peaceful lake spread itself forth, its waters rising and falling in the shining moonlight. The rushes waved and rustled mysteriously, songs and sounds escaped from the blossoms of fading water-plants. With these were mingled melodies of long-past, happy childhood, cradle songs which a dead mother had sung, girlish melodies heard from the lips of a loved one, all floated mysteriously over the waters. The waves surged higher and higher, as if to overpower those sweet recollections, the moonlight grew dim, the flowers shuddered as they closed themselves, and deep, touching complaints arose, penetrating powerfully to the souls of the listeners, who were slowly but surely drawn in to

the melodious grief, joining in battles and sorrows. At length the lake gradually passed away like some airy vision; waves, flowers, the whispering rushes, moonbeams, sighs and tears melted into one another, growing softer and softer until in the far distance was heard a simple, touching song, an inexpressibly sweet melody, the first bars of the birthday song,—

'Von blauen Veilchen war der Kranz
Der Hannchen's Locken schmückte,
Als ich zum ersten Mal im Tanz
Sie schüchtern an mich drückte.'

When Bergen rose from his seat, Kathinka Tz—— was standing by his side.

'Dear, dear Meister,' she said, hastily, and almost inaudibly, her eyes filled with tears, fixed in enthusiastic admiration upon the fine, grave countenance of the simple musician, 'accept my heart-felt thanks. And here, these flowers will better express how much we esteem you!'

She put into his hand a splendid bouquet of violets, in which the delighted Berger immediately recognized his lost treasure.

'They are flowers such as grow in your country,' she continued, 'and they are the gift of my betrothed. It was my whim to wish for violets only; take them to her, to the wife whom you love!'

Twenty-four hours after this occurrence Ludwig Berger was sitting by the dead body of his wife. She had been carried off by a stroke, the doctor said. She died peacefully on her birthday, in the arms of him she loved best; and in a few hours the infant followed

his faithful mother. A wreath of violets lay upon the breast of the smiling dead. The birthday-song was finished, the pale, grief-stricken husband gently laid it at the feet of the sleeper. It now read as follows,—

Von blauen Veilchen war der Kranz
Der Hannchen's Locken schmückte,
Als ich zum ersten Mal im Tanz
Sie schüchtern an mich drückte.
Was Wunder wenn in Feld und Hain
Das blaue Veilchen mir allein
Gefällt vor allen Blumen.

Von blauen Veilchen war der Strauss
Der Hannchen's Busen zierte,
Als ich in unser kleines Haus
Mein junges Weibchen führte,
Schaut nun aus reichem Blumenflor
Ein blaues Veilchen still hervor,
Denk' ich der sel'gen Stunden.

Und als der Tod mir Hannchen nahm,
So fest mit mir verbunden,
Da hab' ich selber ihr voll Gram
Den Leichenkranz gewunden.
Doch nicht von dunklem Rosmarin,
Von blauen Veilchen wand ich ihn,
Die ich mit Thränen netzte.

Who would not think that much, very much of the true violet perfume which hangs around this, Berger's sweetest, saddest melody, had passed into the soul of his noble pupil, Felix Mendelssohn? Is not this proved by that dear, simple,—

'Als ich das erste Veilchen erblickt.'

SCHÖN-AENNCHEN.

Aennchen von Tharau ist's, die mir gefällt,
Sie ist mein Leben mein Gut und mein Geld.

SIMON DACH.

IN the large Prussian town of Königsberg, a narrow, pointed-roofed house stood, but a few years ago, in the vicinity of the beautiful cathedral erected in the year 1332 by the noble Duke Lothair of Brunswick. This curious structure could not fail to attract the attention of strangers by its form and its decorations, tablets of dark wood upon which figures were rudely and roughly carved. Three wide bow windows, with panes of green glass, formed the front of the building, but on the ground floor a heavy, dark brown door, with its knocker in the shape of a dragon's head, had taken the place of the central window. Passing into the house, we found ourselves in a dark passage, at the end of which was an awkward staircase leading to the first storey. Here we arrived in a perfect labyrinth of doors, all of equal height and breadth, all adorned with carvings representing Adam and Eve, the notorious apple-tree, with the serpent and various other animal forms from the Creation. If we happened to press the latch of the first door to the left of the stairs, we should have found ourselves in a room whose coziness, though far removed from our present ideas of comfort, would yet have fallen so warmly upon our hearts that we involuntarily should have thought, 'Here must have lived some gentle, beneficent spirit!' The room had evidently been unoccupied for many long years, but loving eyes had watched

over the ancient furniture, and gentle hands had guarded it from destruction. The arm-chair, with its straight high back, covered with grey damask, stood near the window, where it probably always stood; the broad table before it showed traces of ink-blots; other arm-chairs are ranged round the walls, a faithful but stiff guard of honour to a mighty four-post bed. A kind of old book-case, deprived of its books, stood rather dejectedly in a corner, as if aware of its present useless condition, and a half-blind mirror in its wooden frame still boldly endeavoured, notwithstanding its venerable eye, to reflect the forms of the passers-by.

Who had once occupied this modest room? If you will venture a step into the past with me, the man who spent the greater part of his peaceful life within these walls shall appear to you.

Nearly two hundred years ago, on the 20th July, a man about fifty-eight years of age was sitting in this room. True, the long robe then worn by the 'Magistri artium'—teachers or masters of the arts—and the grey hair which fell upon his shoulders made him appear more advanced in years; but the dark blue eyes were yet full of youth and power. These eyes cared not a whit for the wrinkles and silvery hair which surrounded them, but gazed out from behind the great round spectacles as brightly and happily as the face of a child adorned with its grandmother's morning cap.

This man was the universally celebrated and most learned Magister Simon Dach, Rector of the University, and Professor of Poetry at Königsberg; more especially was he the writer of many good and beau-

tiful poems. His appearance was not so much that of the sage as of the poet. His warm friendliness, his gentle, communicative manner, his cheerfulness, unimpaired by frequent illness, made a most favourable impression on all who knew him, and in the amiable man the celebrity was forgotten. No Königsberg man would pass the venerable one without a particularly low bow; the women stood and courtsied, and the children ran to him, clinging to his hands. Such tokens of respect and love were as sunshine upon the rector's lonely path; he had neither wife nor child, and yet the warmth of affection and friendship seemed essential to his existence.

Perhaps his thoughts were now taking him back to by-gone years, for he had opened the drawer of his desk, and was slowly and thoughtfully unfolding various old yellow papers which he seemed to arrange. The window was open, the pure summer air and the bright sunshine found their way into the room, and a butterfly, borne by some sweet breeze, fluttered playfully around the head of the solitary man. A gentle knock was now heard at the door, which opened, admitting a lovely girl—Aennchen, the daughter of the rector's honest housekeeper. In her hand she carried an immense nosegay, the spoils of her little garden, plundered in honour of her worthy godfather's birthday. She drew after her something which was *not* to be a birthday gift, a handsome Magister Legens, who but a few hours before had been affianced to the pretty girl. Dach stared in some astonishment, he had quite forgotten his birthday, and was not the less bewildered by the address of the blushing maiden, who spoke of 'a long life,' 'jasmine and rosemary,'

'bridegroom and wedding,' in the wildest confusion, while she nervously twisted the string of her white cap; until at last she threw her bouquet upon the table and her arms round her godfather's neck, whispering in his ear what seemed a more intelligible explanation.

All this time the young Magister had been bowing and scraping industriously; it was to him no small honour to be thus *sans façon* introduced into the study of so beloved and celebrated a man, and he was therefore alarmed at his bride's familiarity with the rector. He was vexed, too, that the pretty speech which he had composed for her should, on this important occasion, have been repeated so unintelligibly. He coughed nervously, shifting his weight from one black foot to the other, and anxiously rubbing his hands; his complexion turned from scarlet to deathly paleness at the very idea that the Professor of Poetry might afterwards intend to hold a deeply learned discussion with him. Simon Dach knew nothing of these fears; he had kissed his favourite, and now stretched out his hand to her betrothed, with the simple words,—

'Love and cherish her for all time.'

Then, without heeding the somewhat stammered reply, he searched among his papers a little while, drew forth a sheet, looked sorrowfully upon it, and said,—

'There, Sir Magister, take as a wedding gift my first and last love-song; keep it carefully, and repeat the second verse hundreds of times to your bride, women are apt to forget such things. Many years ago that second verse almost cost me my happy heart. Read it attentively.'

The Magister Legens reverently received the yellow

page, cautiously unfolded it, and read in a mighty voice, as if reciting one of Cicero's orations, the following love-song,—

'Aennchen von Tharau ist's die mir gefällt,
Sie ist mein Leben, mein Gut und mein Geld;
Aennchen von Tharau hat wieder ihr Herz
Auf mich gerichtet in Liebe und Schmerz.
Aennchen von Tharau, mein Reichthum, mein Gut,
Du meine Seele, mein Fleisch und mein Blut!

Käm' alles Wetter gleich auf uns zu schlahn,
Wir sind gesinnt bei einander zu stahn;
Krankheit, Verfolgung, Betrübniss und Pein
Soll unsrer Liebe Verknotigung sein;
Aennchen von Tharau, mein Licht, mein Sonn'
Mein Leben schliess' ich um Deines herum.

Recht wie ein Palmenbaum über sich steigt,
Hat ihn erst Regen und Sturmwind gebeugt,
So wird die Lieb' in uns mächtig und gross
Nach manchem Leiden und traurigem Loos.
Aennchen von Tharau, mein Reichthum mein Gut,
Du meine Seele, mein Fleisch und mein Blut!

Würdest Du gleich einmal von mir getrennt,
Lebtest dort wo man die Sonne kaum kennt,
Ich will dir folgen durch Länder und Meer,
Eisen und Kerker und feindliches Heer!
Aennchen von Tharau, mein Licht meine Sonn',
Mein Leben schliess' ich um Deines herum.'

A pause ensued when the reader had finished. He could not at the moment find a suitable word of admiration, and the poet sat smiling mournfully, lost in recollections.

'Oh! that is indeed too touching and heart-breaking!' said the girl, who had listened with clasped hands 'but who was the Aennchen thus addressed by my most worthy godfather?'

The well-known curiosity of all Eve's daughters flashed from Aennchen's pretty brown eyes, which seemed irresistible, for Simon Dach, speaking like one who dreams, or who talks half unconsciously, suddenly began his story, which was carefully written out by the Magister Legens. I have endeavoured to translate it from the funny, extremely distorted German into our present language, it is the history of this charmingly simple love song.

Simon Dach, born at Memel in the year 1605, was sent by his father to the then very celebrated colleges of Magdeburg and Wittenberg, to prepare for his future studies at the University of Königsberg. The boy, scarcely nineteen years of age, was first sent to Magdeburg, where dwelt a cousin of the young scholar, who allowed him the use of a small room where he could sleep, and also a seat at his table. The tall youth looked extremely handsome in his scholar's dress, a short black jacket, with puffed, slashed sleeves, narrow trousers, and black velvet cap upon his fair hair; and many a lovely maiden would secretly turn her eyes upon him as he passed, softly whistling to himself. There could be no sweeter, softer voice than his—this soon became known; he was, too, an accomplished performer on the lute, which he had learned to play from his mother at home. In the evening he would sing national songs to his young companions, who never wearied of his simple melodies, and the praise and admiration knew no end.

Immediately opposite his lodging was the abode of a wealthy baker, and on a table which stood near a ground-floor window great loaves of all kinds were

rising; there were also rolls and sweet cakes. Over the house door hung an enormous cracknel, the well-known baker's sign. Intending purchasers would knock at the window, the baker pushed it open, the buyer made his bargain, and the wares found their way out through the window. This same baker was always beseiged by purchasers, and many a pane of glass had been broken by importunate customers, who were to be seen there at almost every hour of the day. But why was this? Was the worthy Mr. Valentin's confectionary so unusually excellent? were his loaves so large, his cakes so sweet, his flour so pure?

No, indeed. The fat baker had an eye to his own profit, even as the bakers of the present day; he never gave away so much as a crumb. The answer to the riddle, however, was to be found in the second window, where sat, half hidden by mignonette and wall-flowers, Aennchen, the baker's only and beautiful daughter. Her little cap of crimson velvet could scarcely conceal the tightly plaited tresses of splendid black hair, her dark eyes glowed so alluringly beneath their long lashes, and her tall form in the long, modest dress was so handsome that all looked upon her with admiration. Her own father doted upon his lovely child, and was never weary of adorning her with all kinds of things rare and costly. When Aennchen walked with him to church on Sunday, her dress was fastened with a silver lace, and full five coils of heavy gold chain hung around her white neck, her prayer-book had a golden clasp, and her cap was trimmed with the richest silver lace. And when people stood still to look upon the well-dressed maiden, how proud was the old man of their admiration! Many a suitor

had he refused, for the old baker thought in his heart that his lovely daughter would be no bad match for a knight, and during mass would count a hundred times the broad gold pieces which should once be his daughter's dowry.

Now from the time when Simon Dach first beheld this loveliest of maidens he knew neither rest nor happiness, and his melodies upon the lute were sad and oppressed. He went every morning to buy a roll, bargaining as long as possible, and casting stolen glances towards the spot where sat the lovely Aennchen. It was therefore long before he became aware that the crafty baker sold him rolls as hard as stone, he scarcely knew what he ate. It often happened, too, that in a fit of love's forgetfulness he knocked at the wrong window, when Schön-Aennchen would look up from her work and smile pleasantly upon him. In such cases he always entirely forgot to purchase his breakfast or supper, and ran home hungry, but with a full heart. Once, encouraged by an unusually friendly nod from his secretly beloved, he confided his sorrow to the lovely one in a neatly written epistle, which he thrust, carefully folded, between the mignonette plants; but as Schön-Aennchen could not read, the letter had no results. This failure greatly discouraged him, but at last, in the early spring, his timid love burst into full blossom, and he composed his first song, a sweet, simple, love-song, addressed to the chosen of his heart; the first stanza read thus,—

'Aennchen, Schön-Aennchen ist's die mir gefällt,
Sie ist mein Leben, mein Gut und mein Geld!'

One May evening, when nature herself was one

harmonious love poem, he sang his verses beneath the window of his beloved, accompanying with the tones of his lute the simple melody which he had himself composed. This same melody has been preserved even to the present day, and there are few in our dear German land whose hearts have not been refreshed as it fell upon their ears. The soft, pleasing music and tender words were not without their influence upon the heart of the baker's charming daughter; she slightly opened her window, sobbing and weeping until the sound reached the ears of her lover. Fortunately, Mr. Valentin could not hear a sound, he slept every night the sleep of the just, and no loving mother watched over her child.

On the following day, Martha, the old servant, soon found an opportunity of whispering to the young scholar that Schön-Aennchen wished to see and thank him at two o'clock on the following Sunday afternoon. On Sundays and holidays the baker allowed himself a thorough afternoon's rest, and for the time he was literally a dead man. Although the happy scholar, Simon Dach, sometimes firmly believed that the appointed Sunday would never come, although he said to himself a thousand times that God, having such a terrible number of things to attend to, might quite possibly, in the press of business, forget to send down that one particular Sunday — it came. And not only Sunday morning, but even, strange to say, the afternoon of the garden meeting. The lover, quite pale with delight, appeared before his beloved, who received him smiling and blushing, and held out the tip of her fingers, which he scarcely ventured to touch. Then Aennchen seated herself

upon a low garden bench, the handsome student lay at her feet, and at her request whispered to her the words of his love song. She gazed upon him with beaming eyes, sometimes laying a hand upon his fair hair, and repeated the verses again and again, until at length the whole song flowed freely, softly, and tenderly from her lips. What bliss for the poet! He now endeavoured to teach her the melody, but that was not so easy, Schön-Aennchen had no ear for music; she could not understand the simple air, and her voice was rather harsh and shrill; but at the close of the rendezvous the youthful poet and musician had at least the gratification of hearing his composition sung without a mistake. Old Martha had long been coughing and beckoning, Aennchen therefore hastily plucked for her lover a bunch of blue lilac, touched the forehead of the delighted youth with her rosy lips, and hurried him out at the garden gate, laughing and blushing as she cried,—

'Come again, next Sunday!'

One last meeting was granted to them, a meeting full of tears and sorrow. The youth had received his father's instructions to set out for Wittenberg immediately, and as in those days the commands of a parent were sacred laws to children of whatever age, Simon Dach on the self-same day tied up his bundle and set out on his great journey to Wittenberg. This day happening to be the longed-for second Sunday, Simon Dach, at the appointed hour, crept into the garden and related his sorrow. The lovers took leave of each other with hot tears, they could not tear themselves away. Do not grudge them their sighs and embraces, for they parted in the full consciousness that many years

must pass before they again met; in those days there were no coaches and railways, and even the consolation of letter-writing was far from secure. You may see, therefore, that in those days courtship and marriage must have taken much time. Amid heart-rending sighs Schön-Aennchen repeated again and again the verse,—

> 'Käm' alles Wetter gleich auf uns zu schlahn,
> Wir sind gesinnt bei einander zu stahn,
> Krankheit, Verfolgung, Betrübniss und Pein
> Soll unsrer Liebe Verknotigung sein!'

At last the youth said,—

'Loveliest maiden, wait patiently for me; when I am a Collaborator, or something of that kind, I will come at once, and claim you as my bride. Will you be true to me?'

'To the bitter death!' she answered, solemnly, quickly adding, however, 'but do not wait too long; think, I am already twenty years old!'

They spoke not of obtaining Mr. Valentin's consent to the marriage, or such-like 'trifles'; how should the baker refuse his consent when the Collaborator really came riding up? This, at least, was the secret thought of both the lovers.

The terrible times of siege by the Imperialists, and subsequently by the dreaded Tilly, in the years 1630-31, passed over Magdeburg. History has recorded the horrors of that fearful period, and we will but allude to them here. The furious soldiery plundered, robbed, and murdered at pleasure for the space of three days, over 30,000 persons perished, hundreds of

maidens, dreading a fate more horrible than death, threw themselves from the bridge into the Elbe. A fearful fire almost entirely destroyed the city, the cathedral and about 130 houses alone being rescued from the flames.

The news of these disasters spread throughout the world, and soon reached Königsberg and the quiet study of a certain industrious Collaborator with whom we are acquainted. He despairingly murmured,—

> 'Könnt' ich der folgen durch Länder und Meer,
> Eisen und Kerker und feindliches Heer!'

At length, in the summer of the year 1636, the Conrector Simon Dach, mounted on a meek, lamb-like horse, travelled from Königsberg to Magdeburg, now again open to strangers. Dach was recovering from a long and dangerous illness, caused by the bitter sorrow of his tender heart, and now said to himself that he would fulfil a sacred duty, and weep upon the grave of his beloved. A deeply touching elegy, twenty verses long, rested in the left pocket of his coat, and in the right pocket he had placed a wreath of immortelles, with its long black bow. For she was *dead*, the faithful maiden! who could doubt it? twelve years had passed since Simon Dach had heard anything respecting her. His sorrowful thoughts accompanied him during the whole of his journey; but most mournful were those which assailed him as he beheld the Elbe stream. Ah! Aennchen, the loveliest of maidens, had doubtless been among the first to seek a watery grave, that she might die faithful to her lover. The Conrector's tears flowed at the thought. 'Faithful even

unto death!' he sighed bitterly; 'ah, Schön-Aennchen, what is my love compared with thine?'

As he rode on he scarcely noticed the ruined streets and the countless marks of fearful devastation which were everywhere visible, his eyes were fixed upon the venerable cathedral which must look down upon the dwelling of his beloved, or rather upon the place where once it had stood. Her loving father had met with a miserable fate, he knew it; and she? Now he turned the corner; oh heavens! a few houses still stood uninjured, and among them,—no it was not a dream!—the baker's shop with its huge sign!

The traveller's knees trembled as he dismounted, threw his horse's bridle to a boy, and walked towards the house. The table, with its loaves and little cakes, was still standing in the first window, but no mignonette, no wall-flowers adorned the second. A group of noisy children were playing before the door, and as Dach stood upon the threshold he heard in the shop a somewhat shrill voice, which sang the words,—

'Käm' alles Wetter gleich auf uns zu schlahn,
Wir sind gesinnt bei einander zu stahn,
Krankheit, Verfolgung, Betrübniss und Pein
Soll unsrer Liebe Verknotigung sein!'

Timidly, oh! so timidly, a soft tenor voice joined in the song, trembling as it sang, and at the same moment the door was thrown open by a most remarkably corpulent, tolerably pretty woman, who without the slightest warning fell with a scream upon the singer's neck. The Conrector staggered, not so much from the weighty burden which had fallen so suddenly upon him as from surprise and grief at recognizing his

Aennchen in the ball-like form before him. A few words explained the mystery.

The Conrector had indeed waited too long, and the horrors of war with various adventures had brought serious thoughts of marriage to Schön-Aennchen's mind. With the full consent of her father she bestowed her hand upon a wealthy young baker, who undertook the management of Valentin's business. Old Valentin lived to rock his eldest grandson upon his knee, but soon after, he took such a nap one Sunday afternoon that he slept himself to death; a stroke put an end to his life.

The Königsberg Conrector spent only a few hours beneath the roof of his former betrothed, he then mounted his faithful hack, grasped the hand of Schön-Aennchen, who stood weeping at the door, thrusting into his portmanteau a packet of 'Tilly-cakes' and 'Schweden-brötchen,' and as he bent down to her, whispered softly and mildly,

'Had you remembered the verse which once we repeated at parting, we should both be weeping far different tears!'

When he again reached the Elbe, he drew from his pockets both wreath and elegy, and cast them into the river. Gazing after them as they rapidly floated down the stream, the kindest heart in the world hit upon the wish, 'Oh, would that you lay deep beneath those waters, Schön-Aennchen, I should still have my beautiful love!'

As soon as he arrived in Königsberg he took the song which he had once composed for the lovely girl, scratched out the words 'Schön-Aennchen,' and replaced them by the strange-sounding title,

'Aennchen von Tharau.'

It was natural that this simple narrative from the lips of a godfather, so much honoured and beloved, should have made a most deep impression upon the heart of our Königsberg Aennchen; she did not spare her tears, and repeatedly pressed the hand of her affianced husband. During all the long years of her life she never forgot the beautiful second verse, and carried out its precepts to the infinite satisfaction of her husband, the worthy Magister.

On the next 20th July the young wife again brought a large bouquet as a birthday gift to her dear godfather in his quiet room; but she had to walk somewhat farther than before. Simon Dach had several months ago removed to another home, his new house had a low roof of green turf and beautiful grasses and flowers grew upon it. Within lay the kind-hearted man, sleeping that long sleep which is so wondrously sweet that none of those who thus slumber have thought of awakening.

THE END.

FEBRUARY, 1876.

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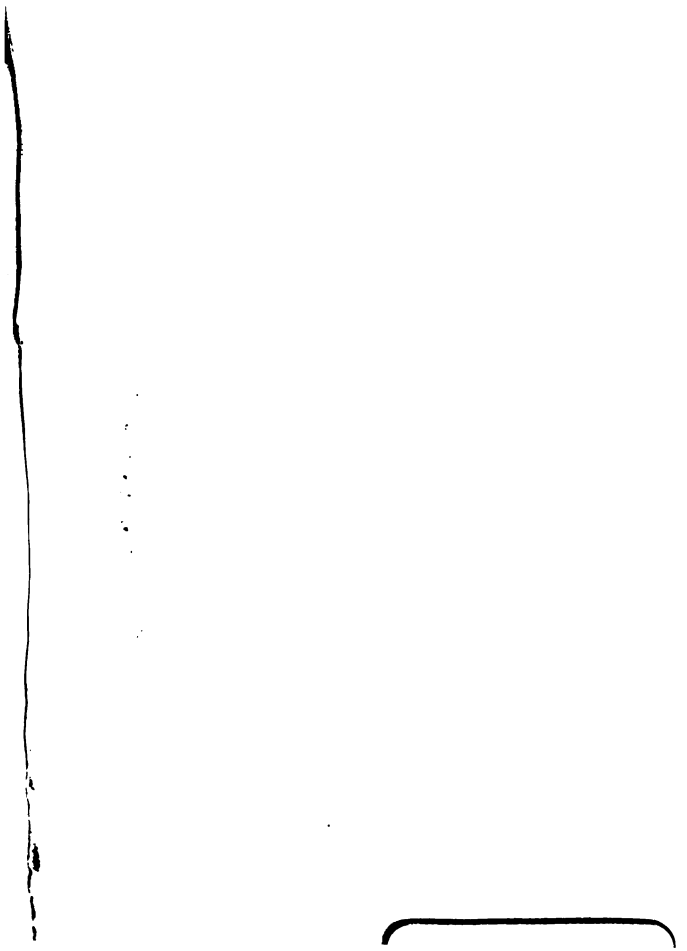
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